MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE MANUAL 2010

FINNISH NATIONAL MARITIME
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MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
BORDER GUARD HEADQUARTERS

Dear reader

Under the current Maritime Search and Rescue Act, the Border Guard is the leading maritime search and rescue (SAR) authority in Finland. In addition to the Border Guard, several other authorities and volunteers also participate in maritime SAR. In an emergency phase the successful conduct of SAR duties calls not only for the efficient utilisation of all of these contributors but also close cooperation with the vessel in distress as well as the efficient and appropriate employment of other vessels near the scene.

This Maritime Search and Rescue Manual has today been adopted by the Ministry of the Interior on the basis of section 27 (2) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act. The Manual has been prepared in cooperation between the Border Guard, the National SAR Coordination Committee, maritime SAR authorities and volunteers.

This Manual is intended for use by all those at sea and those participating in maritime SAR operations to supplement the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR) of the United Nations specialised agency the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the provisions of the Hamburg Convention and the Finnish Maritime Search and Rescue Act and Decree. The Manual aims to maximise the efficiency and appropriateness of the organisation of maritime SAR services and provide sufficient information about maritime SAR tasks, structure, planning, coordination, communication systems, coordination centres' duties and cooperation related to SAR at sea.

The revised Maritime Search and Rescue Guidelines provide more detailed instructions and policies regarding issues such as distress radio traffic and cooperation between passenger ships, shipowners and maritime SAR services.

This Manual repeals the Maritime Search and Rescue Manual 2003 issued by the Ministry of the Interior (1813/42/2003).

This Manual is maintained by the Border Guard Headquarters and the up-to-date version can be found online at www.raja.fi/SAR.

Chief of the Border Guard
Lieutenant General Jaakko Kaukanen

Deputy Chief of the Border Guard
Rear Admiral Matti Möttönen

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ANNEXES

1 THE BASIS OF MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES

1.1 Legislation

The Finnish national basis for maritime search and rescue (SAR) services are laid down in the Maritime Search and Rescue Act (1145/2001) and the Government Decree on Maritime Search and Rescue (37/2002) issued under the Act. A few updates and additions have been made to the Act and Decree since their entry into force.

The Maritime Search and Rescue Act defines maritime SAR services as the search and rescue of persons in distress at sea, provision of emergency medical services for them and conduct of radio communications related to an emergency phase. The Act also lays down provisions regarding the authorities responsible for maritime safety radio communications, *the provision of telemedical assistance services for vessels, maritime assistance services,* the use of certain emergency signalling devices being subject to licence, and preparedness requirements set for maritime SAR services. The Act contains lays down provisions on the duties of the Border Guard and other SAR authorities regarding maritime SAR and the obligation of authorities and private individuals to participate in maritime SAR and provide material for use in maritime SAR services. The Act also sets out the principles of payment of fees and compensation from central government funds to those who have participated or assisted in maritime SAR operations.

The Government Decree on Maritime Search and Rescue sets out more specific provisions regarding maritime SAR delivery.

The current Maritime Search and Rescue Act and the Government Decree on Maritime Search and Rescue can be found in Annexes 1 and 2.

1.2 International agreements

The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (Hamburg, 27 April 1979), as amended in 1998 and 2004, hereafter the Hamburg Convention, is the key international agreement on maritime SAR services. The operational provisions on the arrangement of SAR services can be found in the technical Annex of the Hamburg Convention. The Convention and its Annex create the international foundation and specify the performance requirements for the maritime SAR systems of the world's coastal states. Parties to the Convention are encouraged to enter into SAR agreements with neighbouring states that involve the establishment of SAR regions and the arrangement of cooperation in maritime SAR operations. The Convention states that the parties should undertake to adopt all legislative and other appropriate measures necessary to give full effect to the convention and its Annex, which is an integral part of the Convention. Among other things, this means that the parties must ensure that necessary arrangements are made for the provision of adequate SAR services for persons in distress at sea around their coasts. The Hamburg Convention also contains provisions regarding issues such as the coordination of SAR operations, classification of emergency phases on the basis of their seriousness, the measures required in response to emergency phases, and SAR plans and systems employed. Information about the key agreements affecting maritime SAR arrangements can be found in Annex 4 to this Manual.

In compliance with the Hamburg Convention, Finland has entered into agreements with its neighbouring states regarding the Search and Rescue Region (SRR) each state is responsible for and regarding SAR-related cooperation arrangements.

The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (1974) and amendments thereto, hereafter the SOLAS Convention, also contains the general obligation to provide maritime SAR services. State parties to the SOLAS Convention undertake to take all necessary arrangements for coastal surveillance and for the rescue of persons in distress at sea around their coasts. These arrangements must include the establishment, operation and maintenance of such search and rescue facilities as are deemed practicable and neces-

sary, having regard to the density of the seagoing traffic and the navigational dangers. According to the SOLAS Convention, these arrangements must, so far as possible, provide adequate means of locating and rescuing such persons. Article 98 of the UN Convention on the Law at Sea (1982) also lays down the general obligation for coastal states to arrange a search and rescue service.

Passenger ships within the scope of application of Chapter I of the SOLAS Convention must have on board a plan for cooperation in the event of an emergency developed in cooperation with the SAR services responsible for the Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) along the ship's route. Shipping companies must together with their vessels and the appropriate SAR services actively participate in the creation of cooperation plans in accordance with the instructions approved by the IMO. The plan must include provisions for periodic exercises to be undertaken to test its effectiveness. Plans need not be subjected for approval by the national maritime administration. More detailed description of cooperation between shipowners, passenger ships and Finnish maritime SAR services can be found under Section 4 "Cooperation" of this Manual.

1.3 Regulations and guidelines

The International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual, hereafter the IAMSAR Manual, published by the IMO and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is for maritime SAR based on the Hamburg Convention and for aviation on the Chicago Convention. The IAMSAR Manual contains practical guidelines for the organisation of maritime and aeronautical SAR, mission coordination, operations of search and rescue units (SRUs) and provision of SAR-related training. The manual is not binding but provides a good foundation for the appropriate provision of maritime and aeronautical SAR services.

Provisions laid down at the national level in Finland have been supplemented by this Manual and administrative regulations, instructions and guides issued by the Border Guard and its Coast Guard Districts.

1.4 Terms and definitions

Maritime search and rescue (SAR) means a set of duties that include the search and rescue of persons in distress at sea, provision of emergency medical services for them and conduct of radio communications related to an emergency phase. Other duties regarded as part of maritime SAR include the provision of telemedical assistance services for vessels, maritime assistance services, the use of certain emergency signalling devices and emergency medical services at sea.

Maritime search and rescue (SAR) authorities are the Border Guard as well as the Emergency Response Service Administration, the Finnish Meteorological Institute, the regional rescue departments referred to in the Rescue Act (468/2003), the Finnish Transport Safety Agency, the Finnish Transport Agency, the Police, the Finnish Defence Forces, social welfare and health care authorities, Finnish Customs and environmental authorities. In Åland the corresponding authorities operating under the Government of Åland act are also maritime SAR authorities.

Search and Rescue Region (SRR) means the maritime area that comprises Finland's territorial waters, the islands therein and the parts of international waters directly adjacent to the territorial waters on which Finland has agreed separately with the neighbouring states.

Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) is a sub-region within the Search and Rescue Region (SRR) that usually comprises the surveillance area of the Coast Guard District in question and other areas of the SRR in its vicinity as agreed or ordered more specifically on the matter and in which the Coast Guard District in question is responsible for maritime search and rescue (SAR).

Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) means a designated Coast Guard co-ordination centre that acts as the Finnish national Search and Rescue Region's (SRR) co-ordination centre and the international point of contact for Finnish search and rescue (SAR) services and that takes care of the continuous maintenance of coordination and communication preparedness and coordinates SAR operations within its Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS).

Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) means a separately designated Coast Guard co-ordination or other centre that either independently or subordinate to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) takes care of the continuous maintenance of coordination and communication preparedness and coordinates search and rescue (SAR) operations within its Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) or other separately designated area.

Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre means the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSCs).

Search and Rescue Unit (SRU) means a vessel or aircraft with a crew trained and equipped for maritime search and rescue (SAR) operations.

Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) is a Border Guard officer of a Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre with special training for the duty tasked with the coordination of search and rescue operations.

Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC) is a Coast Guard commander responsible for maritime search and rescue arrangements for the Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS).

On-Scene Co-Ordinator (OSC) is a person whose duty is to coordinate and harmonise on-scene search and rescue operations under the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC).

Aircraft Coordinator (ACO) is a person whose duty is to coordinate and harmonise on-scene aeronautical search and rescue operations.

Emergency phase as a general concept means a situation where a person is or may be in distress at sea. Emergency phases are divided into the uncertainty, alert and distress phase.

Uncertainty phase is a situation in which there is uncertainty about a person's safety at sea or another reason to take measures to assess any need for assistance.

Alert phase means a situation in which a person's safety at sea can be assumed to have been compromised or inquiries made due to the uncertainty phase have been unsuccessful.

Distress phase means a situation where it is apparent that a person is in danger at sea and in need of immediate assistance. Examples of the distress phase include situations where a distress message has been received from a vessel or another international distress signal regarding the vessel has been set off from the vessel.

Non-distress situation means a situation that is not an emergency phase but in which a person at sea or by the sea on an island is in need of outside assistance and the provision of which has not been assigned to a responsible party.

Multimodal accident means an accident or emergency phase in which there is the risk of loss of human life and also of loss or damage to the environment, vessel, her cargo or other property.

Emergency medical services (EMS) mean the branch of medical services responsible for providing acute medical care to patients primarily outside health care institutions and, where necessary, the transport of patients to the most appropriate health care unit.

Safety radio communications means radio communications used in order to protect or save human life or property. According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations, such communications primarily take place as distress traffic, urgency traffic or safety traffic in maritime radiocommunications.

Maritime Assistance Service (MAS) means a communication link service that supports maritime search and rescue preparedness planning and prevention of maritime emergency phases and accidents and serves as a national point of contact for vessels for assistance needs and exchanges of information.

Telemedical assistance service (TMAS) means the provision of urgent medical services, including specialist services, for vessels at sea via a satellite or mobile phone network.

Cospas-Sarsat System means an international satellite system for search and rescue used for the transmission of distress alerts sent by emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), emergency locator transmitters (ELTs) or personal locator beacons (PLBs) via a satellite link.

Abbreviations of the most commonly used maritime SAR terminology can be found in Annex 9.

2 MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2.1 Division of tasks in maritime search and rescue services

Under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, the Border Guard is the leading maritime search and rescue (SAR) authority in Finland and responsible for the provision of maritime SAR services. As the leading SAR authority, the Border Guard must see to the planning, development and supervision of maritime SAR and the harmonisation of the activities of authorities and volunteers participating in maritime SAR. The Border Guard leads and conducts SAR operations employing all of its appropriate resources and provides maritime SAR-related coordination training. The Border Guard is also responsible for emergency phase-related radiocommunications and the provision of telemedical assistance services (TMAS) for vessels, participates in emergency prevention and is in charge of the Maritime Assistance Services (MAS). In the context of the Cospas-Sarsat System, the Border Guard is responsible for receiving distress alerts sent by emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), emergency locator transmitters (ELTs) and personal locator beacons (PLBs) and for relaying them to the national responsible party as well as the national harmonisation of issues related to the Cospas-Sarsat System. Where necessary, the Border Guard may also provide other maritime SAR-related training and public education.

The maritime SAR duties of the other maritime SAR authorities are as follows:

The Emergency Response Service Administration participates in the alerting of Search and Rescue Units (SRUs) and personnel participating in maritime SAR missions as separately agreed.

The Finnish Meteorological Institute provides the Border Guard with access to expertise within its field and produces for the Border Guard the weather and oceanographic services required for maritime SAR services.

The Finnish Transport Safety Agency is responsible for vessel safety and its development and provides the Border Guard with access to expertise within its field.

The Finnish Transport Agency maintains the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) referred to in the Vessel Traffic Service Act (623/2005) and participates in SAR operations by providing access to its personnel and equipment.

The regional rescue departments, the Police and Finnish Customs participate in SAR operations by providing access to their personnel and equipment.

The Finnish Defence Forces survey the sea areas to detect and locate accidents and emergency phases in conjunction with surveillance of territorial integrity and participates in SAR operations by providing access to its special expertise, personnel and equipment.

Social welfare and health care authorities are responsible for the provision of emergency medical services (EMS) and telemedical assistance services (TMAS).

Environmental authorities are responsible for the arrangement of responses to oil and chemical pollution caused by vessels in conjunction with maritime accidents together with other authorities in accordance with the Act on the Prevention of Pollution from Ships and legislation pertaining to oil and chemical pollution and provide the Border Guard with access to expertise within their field.

In addition to the above maritime SAR authorities, the following associations, organisations and private individuals participate in maritime SAR operations.

The air traffic service provider referred to in the Aviation Act (1194/2009) participates free of charge in the development of maritime SAR cooperation, maintenance of maritime SAR preparedness and SAR operations wherever it has appropriate expertise, personnel and equipment related to its field. The content of such cooperation is agreed upon in

greater detail under an agreement between the Border Guard and the air traffic service provider.

Under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, contributors other than the above state authorities, enterprises and agencies must also, on request, provide the Border Guard and other maritime SAR authorities with access to their expertise, personnel and equipment free of charge where this is necessary for preparedness planning or in response to an emergency phase.

Volunteer associations and other organisations participate in maritime SAR operations in accordance with their rules and by-laws and the nature of their activity. The Border Guard may assign maritime SAR volunteers with maritime SAR tasks as well as training and public education tasks. Volunteers cannot, however, be used in tasks that involve a considerable amount of exercise of public power. Where necessary, the maritime SAR tasks of each organisation participating in maritime SAR operations are defined in greater detail under the Maritime SAR Plans of the Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRS). The Finnish Lifeboat Institution and Aland Island Lifeboat Society harmonise the activities of volunteer associations participating in SAR at sea, while the Finnish Red Cross harmonises operations on land in particular.

In addition to maritime SAR authorities and volunteers, **every able-bodied person** on or in the vicinity of an emergency or accident scene is, if necessary to search for or rescue persons in danger at sea, obliged on the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator's (SMC's) order to assist in a maritime SAR task unless prevented from doing so by a valid reason.

Under the Maritime Act (674/1994), the **master of a vessel** who encounters those in distress must, if possible without this resulting in a major risk to their own vessel or crew or others on board, render all assistance that is possible and necessary to rescue those in distress. Having received a distress alert, the master must report as proceeding to their assistance so that the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) can assign the vessel to a SAR task. The Maritime Act (Chapter 6, section 11 a) also obliges the master to notify the appropriate MRCC/MRSC if the vessel is in danger of distress. In the event of a distress phase the master must without delay begin distress traffic in accordance with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations.

Under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act the general obligation to render assistance to those in danger at sea also applies to others than masters of vessels. Under the Act, **everyone who is aware of another person being in danger at sea** is bound, so far as they can do so without unreasonable danger to themselves or others, to take initiative to take any measures that are necessary and possible to rescue those in danger. The appropriate MRCC/MRSC must be notified without delay of the measures taken.

2.2 Management levels and their duties

2.2.1 Maritime search and rescue services (administrative management levels)

In the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR), the Border Guard is responsible for the provision, planning, development, supervision and harmonisation of maritime SAR services, the conduct of radiocommunications related to emergency phases and the relaying of telemedical assistance services (TMAS) to vessels. The Border Guard is also responsible for the Maritime Assistance Services (MAS), the receipt of distress alerts in the Cospas-Sarsat System and relaying them to the national responsible party as well as the national harmonisation of issues related to the Cospas-Sarsat System. The Border Guard participates in the prevention of emergency phases, coordinates and conducts SAR operations and provides maritime SAR-related coordination training.

2.2.1.1 The Border Guard Headquarters

The maritime SAR management system is based on the Border Guard's organisation and area division. The Border Guard Headquarters is an administrative management level that does not participate in the operational coordination of SAR missions. The duty of the Border Guard Headquarters in maritime SAR is to attend to planning, development and supervision as well as the harmonisation of the activities of authorities and volunteers participating in maritime SAR at the national level. The Headquarters is also responsible for the coordination of the development and harmonisation of the various types of maritime SAR operations, training and equipment.

Together with the Border Guard Headquarters, the Chief of the Border Guard monitors the effectiveness, service level and performance of operational maritime SAR services.

The National SAR Coordination Committee is chaired by a Border Guard officer appointed by the Border Guard Headquarters. The Headquarters participates in the preparation of maritime SAR-related legislation and international agreements and sees to the preparation and maintenance of relevant regulations and guidelines. The Headquarters is also responsible for arranging international cooperation in the maritime SAR sector and representing Finnish maritime SAR services in the sector's international organisations and collaboration forums.

2.2.1.2 The Coast Guard Districts and the Air Patrol Squadron

The Coast Guard Districts and the Air Patrol Squadron are administrative management levels but also responsible for the Border Guard's maritime operations. The Finnish SRR is divided into the Gulf of Finland and the West Finland (Archipelago Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia) Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRS). The relevant Coast Guard District is responsible for maritime SAR delivery in its respective SRS. The Air Patrol Squadron is responsible for the Border Guard's aircraft activities and therefore also for the preparedness and operation of maritime SAR helicopters and surveillance aircraft within the Finnish SRR.

The duty of the Coast Guard District in maritime SAR is to attend to maritime SAR planning, development and supervision as well as the harmonisation of the activities of authorities and volunteers participating in maritime SAR in its SRS as the authority with regional responsibility. Through its operations, the Coast Guard District must create the best possible prerequisites for the efficient operational coordination and conduct of maritime SAR actions.

In addition to the above duties, the West Finland Coast Guard District also sees to the monitoring of national maritime SAR resources, maintains international operational contacts in maritime SAR and acts as the national point of contact for all distress alerts related to the Cospas-Sarsat System (including SSAS alerts related to ISPS activity). Alongside the West Finland Coast Guard District, the Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District also maintains the capabilities to collaborate with neighbouring states and the neighbouring SRS's MRCC/MRSCs.

A Coast Guard District may authorise the use of emergency signalling devices for exercise purposes. Further provisions on such devices are laid down in the Government Decree (Annex 2). Furthermore, the use of such emergency signalling devices for exercise purposes in a location other than a vessel or aircraft may be authorised in coastal municipalities by the Coast Guard District and elsewhere in Finland by the Police. Authorisation is subject to the condition that there is no risk of unnecessary SAR operations being launched and that the activity does not compromise safety. If necessary, the authority providing the authorisation may assign a leader for the exercise, whose orders and instructions must be obeyed by those participating in the exercise.

2.2.2 Search and rescue operations (operational coordination levels)

2.2.2.1 Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC)

As the Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC), the Commander of the Coast Guard District is responsible for making sure the Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) has a functioning maritime SAR system and a MRCC/MRSC for its coordination. The Commander is responsible for their Coast Guard District's use of personnel, equipment and resources and for maintaining the preparedness required for maritime SAR in its SRS. The Commander is also responsible for the activities of the SRS Management Board invites its members for maritime SAR planning and harmonisation and confirms the SRS-specific Maritime SAR Plan. In demanding SAR missions the SC or their deputy harmonise the operations of maritime SAR, general rescue services, aeronautical SAR and any other participants with the assistance of the SRS Management Boards.

2.2.2.2 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre and Sub-Centres

Maritime search and rescue missions are coordinated by the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) operating or a Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC), which are under the Coast Guard Headquarters. The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC Turku) is located at the West Finland Coast Guard District Headquarters in Turku. There are two Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres: MRSC Vaasa operates under MRCC Turku in an office building in Vaasa. MRSC Helsinki coordinates SAR activity in the Gulf of Finland and is located at the Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District Headquarters in Helsinki. The MRCC and MRSCs have a designated Chief. The Chiefs are responsible for ensuring for their respective MRCC/MRSC that:

1. the personnel of the centre have sufficient professional competence and there is a sufficient number of personnel in each shift;
2. the centre's equipment is in appropriate working order and the personnel are capable of using it;
3. the Maritime SAR Plan for the SRS is up-to-date.

The MRCC/MRSCs are tasked within their respective SRS or a part thereof with the maintenance of direct coordination and communication preparedness for maritime SAR, the provision of assistance to those in danger at sea and the coordination of SAR operations. The MRCC/MRSCs monitor maritime safety radiocommunications to detect any emergency phases and are responsible for maritime SAR radiocommunications during emergency phases.

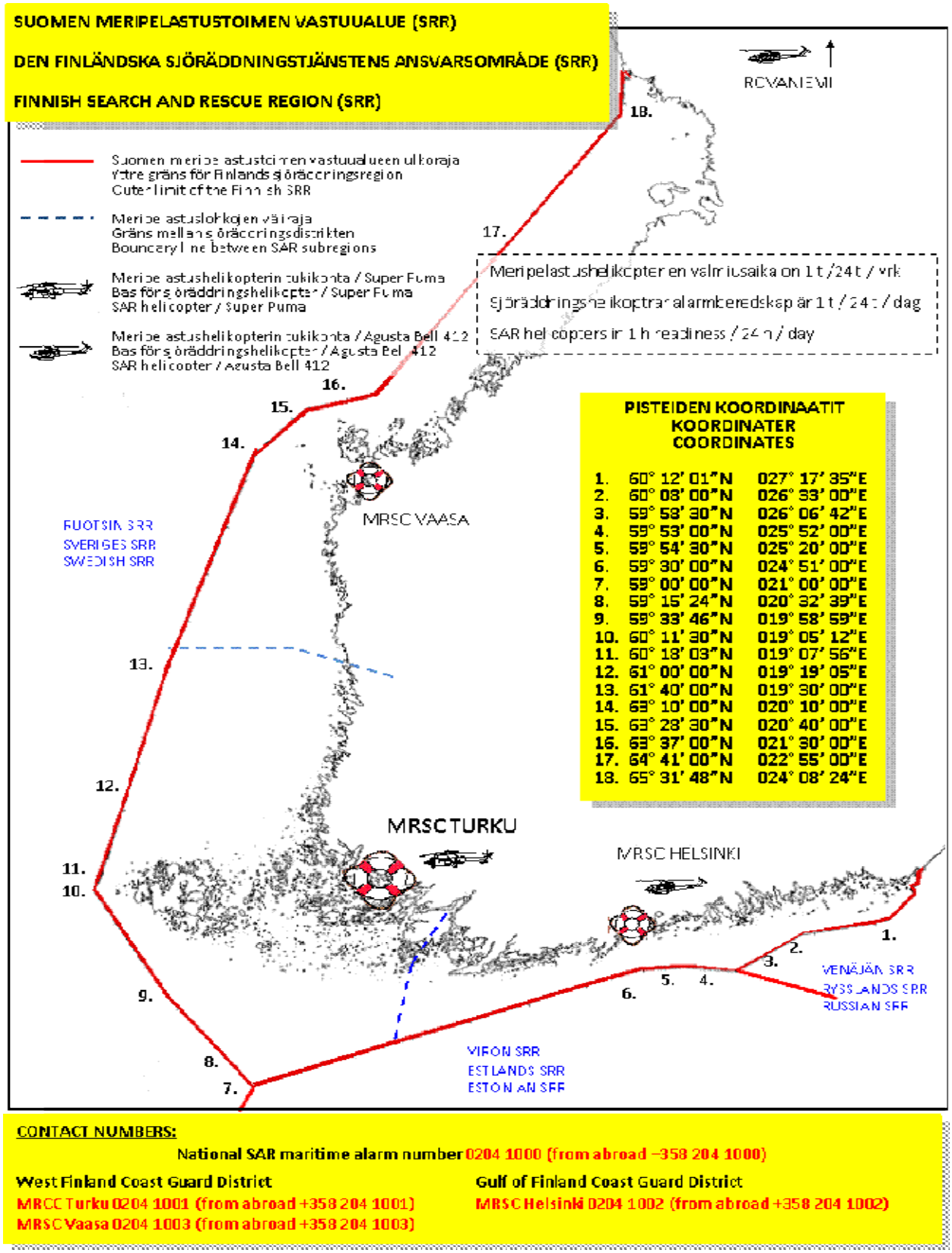
In addition to performing the duties assigned to MRSCs, the MRCC also acts as the centre for national harmonisation within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR). In this capacity it maintains situation awareness of the preparedness of the most important national Search and Rescue Units (SRUs) and is prepared to assign resources, where necessary, to the MRSC coordinating the SAR actions. It also decides on the targeting of maritime SAR resources in situations where they are required simultaneously in more than one SRS. The MRCC provides backup to the MRSCs and, where necessary, acts as a reserve centre for coordination.

The MRCC also acts as the international point of contact for Finnish maritime SAR services. It maintains situation awareness of the preparedness of the most important international SRUs. Its duties also include acting as the intenational SAR Point of Contact (SPOC) for the Cospas-Sarsat System. The MRCC also acts as the point of contact for Maritime Assistance Services (MAS) and Ship Security Alert System (SSAS). The MRCC in receives international reports and requests for assistance regarding maritime environmental protection and passes them on to the environmental authorities. It also launches immediate action in response to vessel oil discharges. The MRCC decides upon the provision of or requests for maritime SAR assistance outside Finland on the basis of intergovernmental agreements or requests by foreign states where this is necessary to save

human lives. If the MRCC makes a request for assistance to a foreign organisation, it must also actively organise for attendance to any permit, notification and other corresponding matters with the cooperation authorities related to the entry into Finland of foreign SRUs.

The MRCC/MRSCs keep each other aware of maritime SAR emergency phases by entering incident-related data into the national Maritime SAR Information System.

REGIONAL DIVISION OF FINNISH SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES



2.2.2.3 Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC)

The person in charge of the operational coordination during maritime SAR incidents is the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) on duty at the time in accordance with the shift schedule. The SMC determines which emergency phase is at hand and is responsible for ensuring the MRCC/MRSC responsible takes the actions required by the situation. The SMC is assisted by the other personnel of the MRCC/MRSC. The SMC is responsible

for searches for and rescue of persons in danger at sea. In most cases the SMC is also responsible for media relations. If so required by the situation, however, the Coast Guard District must have sufficient preparedness to appoint a designated organisation for media relations. Where necessary, the SMC appoints an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) or an Aircraft Coordinator (ACO) to assist the SMC. Decisions regarding the suspension and termination of SAR actions are made by the SMC. In individual cases the Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC) or their deputy may exercise their right to decide upon a matter.

2.2.2.4 On-Scene Coordinator

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) may appoint an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) whose duty is to coordinate on-scene search and rescue actions not taking place on board the vessel in distress under the SMC. The master of the vessel is responsible for rescue and evacuation measures on board the vessel in distress. Where necessary, two OSCs can be appointed for large-scale SAR operations. In such cases the duties of the OSCs must be divided into two clear sets; for example, one can be tasked with assisting the vessel in distress and evacuation of persons and the one with coordinating on-scene search measures.

A person appointed as an OSC must be an officer with in-depth competence in the tasks. In urgent cases where this is necessary to save human lives, a capable person other than an officer may be appointed as an OSC. To assist the OSC, an On-Scene Management Team can also be appointed, but the Team may only play an expert role with regard to maritime SAR.

Before appointing an OSC, the SMC should make sure the person is capable and willing to perform the role. A member of the crew of a vessel sailing in international waters under a flag other than the Finnish flag may not be appointed as an OSC against their will.

To appoint an OSC is the appropriate solution particularly in cases where there are a lot of SRUs employed or a lot of vessels arrive at the scene in response to a distress call. A person who is on the scene usually has the best capacities to coordinate all of the vessels arriving at the scene as efficiently as possible.

Efforts should be made to appoint as the OSC the head of the SRU with best capacities for coordination. A Border Guard officer sent to the scene from an on-land base can also be appointed as an OSC. The MRCC/MRSC supports the coordination activity of the OSC by providing the OSC with the necessary resources. Whether or not an OSC has been appointed, the responsibility for overall operational coordination remains with the SMC.

The SMC can issue SRUs on the scene with binding orders and instructions. In their duties under the SMC, the OSC exercises public power and acts under legal liability for acts in office. The person appointed in the role must always be specifically informed that they will be acting in the role under full legal liability for acts in office.

2.2.2.5 Aircraft Coordinator

The appointment of an Aircraft Coordinator (ACO) is justified particularly in cases where there are a lot of aircraft participating in an SAR operation. The appointment of an ACO takes place in the same manner as that of an OSC and an ACO operates under the SMC. An ACO is tasked with coordinating and harmonising aeronautical SAR activity on the scene as outlined by the SMC. As a rule, an ACO performs their duties from the MRCC/MRSC or other location suited well for aircraft coordination.

A person appointed as an ACO must be a person who has in-depth competence in the duties and has completed ACO training. Border Guard officers should primarily be appointed to the role, if available. Where necessary, another person who has completed ACO training or who is highly competent in aircraft radiocommunications may be appointed as an assistant to the ACO. In urgent cases where this is necessary to save human lives, another capable person may be temporarily appointed as an ACO. The above provisions regarding the powers and legal liability for acts in office of the OSC also apply to ACOs.

2.2.2.6 Master of the vessel and other contributors

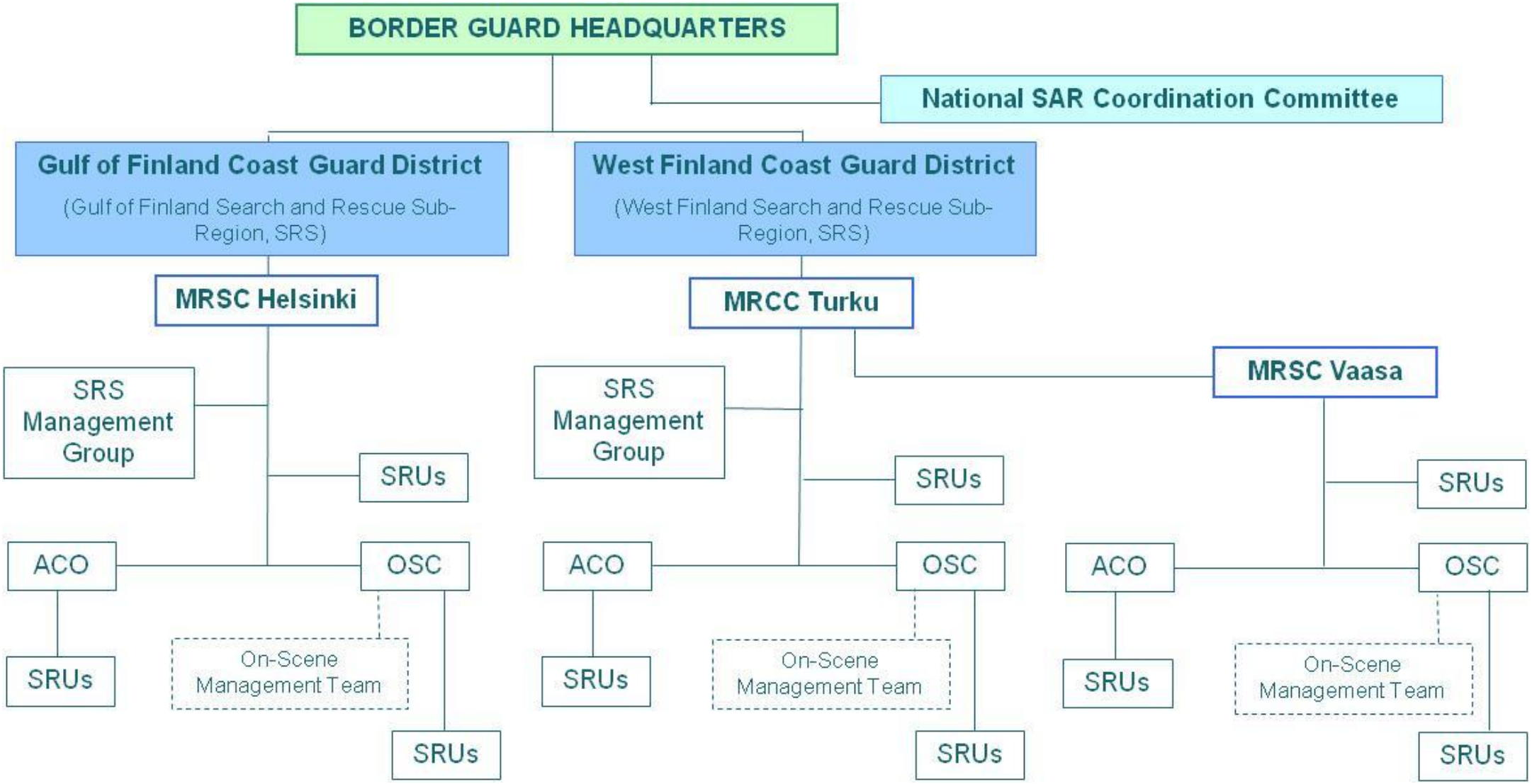
Rescue measures on board a vessel in distress are coordinated by the master of the vessel, including for any external groups. The SMC may assign contact persons for the vessel in distress, the evacuation centre and other locations with a key role in the mission, tasked with providing expert maritime SAR assistance in the location.

2.2.3 The National SAR Coordination Committee and Management Boards

For the purpose of maritime SAR planning, development and monitoring, the Ministry of the Interior appoints a National SAR Coordination Committee to assist the Border Guard for a term of three years at a time. The Committee is chaired by a Border Guard officer with in-depth competence in maritime SAR. Other members of the Committee comprise a sufficient number of representatives of other maritime SAR authorities and key volunteer organisations in the field. The Committee has the right to appoint a part-time secretary. The Committee does not participate in the coordination of SAR operations in conjunction with emergency phases.

The Coast Guard Districts are assisted by the the Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) Management Board headed by the Commander of the Coast Guard District. The duties of the SRS Management Board are operational and administrative. Its operational duties are, where so required by an emergency phase, to provide assistance to the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) in the harmonisation of the maritime SAR tasks of authorities, volunteer associations and other organisations and other contributors and, where necessary, to acquire access to other supplementary resources. Where necessary, the SRS Management Board can be extended to also include representatives of the national management of authorities, voluntary associations and other organisations if so required by the scope or other special nature of the incident. In order to be able to operate efficiently, the SRS Management Board also needs its own support organisation. The Management Board is also used to provide administrative assistance to the Coast Guard District in maritime SAR planning.

Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination Chart



2.3 The communications system

2.3.1 Division of tasks between authorities

The Border Guard is responsible for radiocommunications during maritime SAR emergency phases and the maintenance of related preparedness. Emergency phase radiocommunications include a watch on distress frequencies and traffic, response to distress alerts and calls, mobilisation of SRUs and coordination of radiocommunications during SAR operations.

The Border Guard maintains constant preparedness for emergency phase radiocommunications at MRCC Turku, MRSC Helsinki and MRSC Vaasa by keeping a continuous communication watch on international maritime radiocommunications on VHF, MF, distress and safety channels and frequencies in accordance with the table below. The MRCC/MRSCs coordinate distress traffic and are responsible for operational coordination and the mobilisation of the necessary units at sea areas.

The Finnish Transport Agency is responsible for other maritime safety radiocommunications and keeping a communication watch on distress traffic in the Saimaa area. Other safety radiocommunications include but are not limited to the relaying of maritime safety information, distress message traffic, Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) radiocommunications and the radiocommunications for the Gulf of Finland Mandatory Reporting System (GOFREP).

The division of tasks in maritime radiocommunications can be seen in the table below.

Authority	**Task**	**Radiocommunications**	**Coast station**	**MMSI**	**Channels/frequencies watched**[1]	
					VHF	**MF**
Border Guard (Coast Guard Districts)	Coordination of maritime SAR operations	Distress and urgency traffic *) TMAS **)	MRCC Turku	002301000	70 (DSC) 16	2187.5 kHz (DSC)
			MRSC Helsinki	002302000		
			MRSC Vaasa	002303000		
Finnish Transport Agency	Maritime safety information provision	Safety traffic*	Turku Radio	002300230	70 (DSC) 16	2187.5 kHz (DSC)

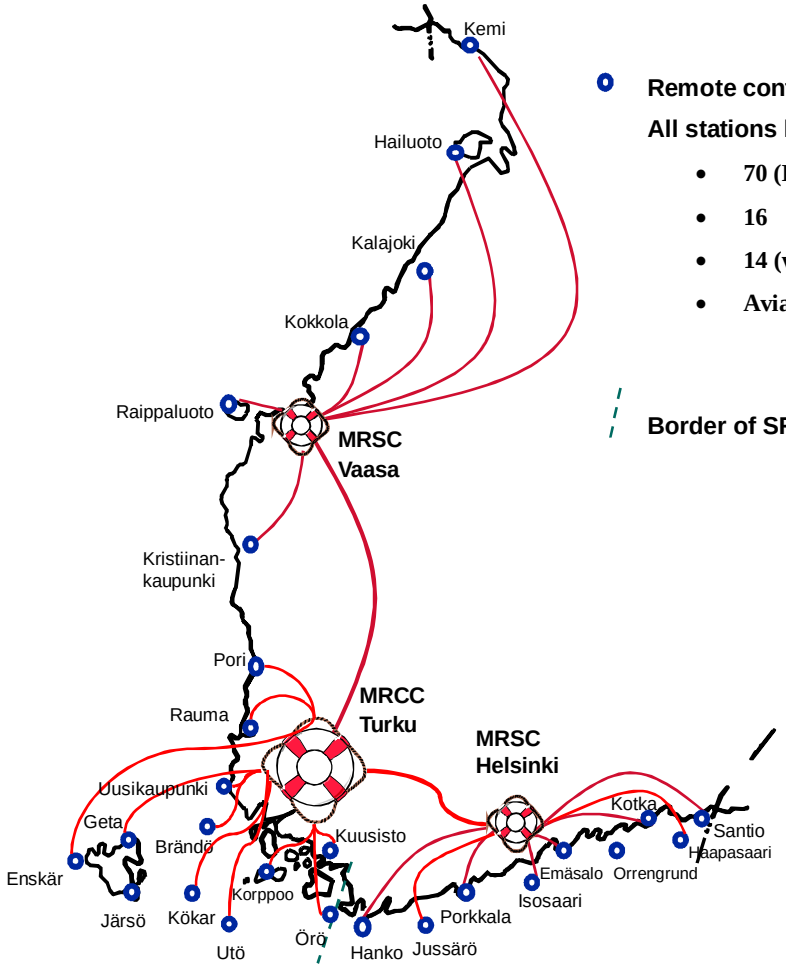
*) The Coast Radio Station decides upon the working channels/frequencies used in accordance with the Radio Regulations.
**) Telephone link via the Finnish national maritime rescue emergency number.

The MRCC and MRSCs keep a constant marine radiocommunications watch on the following international distress and safety frequencies:

- VHFDSC channel 70 (156.525 MHz)
- VHF channel 16 (156.800 MHz)
- MFDSC frequency 2187.5 kHz

The aeronautical distress frequency is 121.5 MHz. The frequency used for cooperation with the aeronautical SAR services during emergency phases is 123.1 MHz.

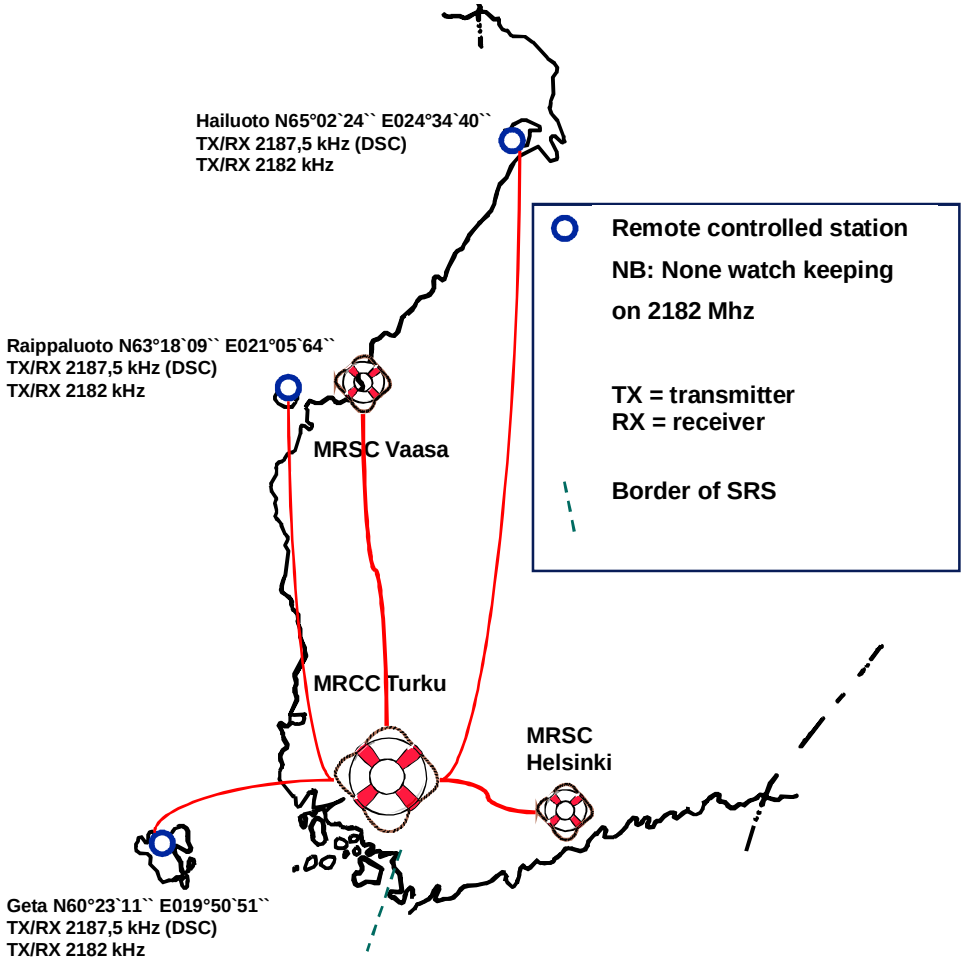
THE FINNISH BORDERGUARD
WATCH KEEPING ON VHF



- Remote controlled station
- All stations have
  - 70 (DSC)
  - 16
  - 14 (working ch)
  - Aviation VHF
- Border of SRS

Callsign:	MMSI:
Rescue Centre Turku	002301000
Rescue Centre Helsinki	002302000
Rescue Centre Vaasa	002303000

THE FINNISH BORDERGUARD
WATCH KEEPING ON MF



- Remote controlled station
- NB: None watch keeping on 2182 Mhz
- TX = transmitter
  RX = receiver
- Border of SRS

Callsign:	MMSI:
Rescue Centre Turku	002301000
Rescue Centre Helsinki	002302000
Rescue Centre Vaasa	002303000

2.3.2 Emergency phase reports

- Maritime SAR emergency phases must primarily be reported to the nearest MRCC/MRSC.
- Everyone must without delay pass on any reports and other information they have received regarding an emergency phase to the MRCC/MRSC and notify the MRCC/MRSC of any observations and measures regarding the emergency phase.
- In the event of a distress phase vessels with GMDSS equipment on board must transmit a distress alert in accordance with the GMDSS. If a vessel does not carry GMDSS equipment or a marine VHF radio, the report can be transmitted using a device such as mobile phone.
- Depending on the vessel's equipment, a request for help can also be sent using another international distress signal or the telephone.
- Maritime radiocommunications must take place in accordance with the procedures laid down in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations.
- A vessel in distress may use all possible means of distress reporting to call for help.

FINNISH NATIONAL MARITIME
SAR ALARM NUMBER

0294 1000

(+358 294 1000 for calls from outside Finland)

You can also call 112 to alert the maritime SAR services!

Sufficiently early reporting of impending danger of distress at sea

The Maritime Act (Chapter 6, section 11 a) obliges the master of a vessel to provide, if possible, a sufficiently early report if the vessel is in danger of distress.

> *"If the vessel is in such danger of distress at sea that may result in danger to those on board, the master shall without delay notify the MRCC or MRSC referred to in the Maritime Search and Rescue Act (1145/2001) or other unit coordinating search and rescue operations in the area in question."*

The purpose of this reporting is to provide the maritime SAR authorities with an advance notification about the impending emergency phase and this way allow the authorities time to prepare in advance for a possible distress situation. The report can be given using methods such as a mobile phone call to the maritime SAR emergency number. If the phase experienced by the vessel turns into a distress phase after the vessel has reported the danger of distress, the vessel must initiate appropriate distress traffic using the maritime radio system.

If the vessel is unable to contact the local MRCC/MRSC, the message can also be passed on to the martime SAR authorities via the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) or an Emergency Response Centre.

2.3.3 General information about the GMDSS

The Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS) is based on equipment used at sea, on land and in the air to transmit distress messages as fast as possible to those responsible for SAR. The GMDSS was launched globally in 1999. Vessels participating in the GMDSS are required to carry such radio equipment that always enables the transmission of distress alerts from the sea area in which the vessel operates to SAR authorities on land. The system enables the speedy alert of land-based authorities coordinating SAR actions and of vessels near the vessel or person in distress to render assistance so that they can assist in coordinated SAR measures with minimum delay.

Radio equipment in accordance with the GMDSS is compulsory on board commercial vessels, but a considerable amount of vessels, including recreational ones, are so far not included in the system. A recreational vessel becomes a GMDSS participant once equipped with a device compatible with the system (such as VHF radio with DSC).

2.3.3.1 GMDSS subsystems

The GMDSS consists of several independent radio and communication systems that have been brought together to create one more extensive system.

- Digital Selective Calling (DSC) device and radiotelephone on VHF, MF or HF frequencies
- Cospas-Sarsat Emergency Position-Indicating Beacon (EPIRB)
- Inmarsat
- Search and Rescue Radar Transponder (SART)
- Portable VHF radiotelephone

In addition, the GMDSS can be used to transmit Maritime Safety Information (MSI).

2.3.3.2 Initiation of distress traffic in the GMDSS

During a distress phase vessels can use the following methods to transmit a distress alert using the GMDSS:

- Digital Selective Calling (DSC) on VHF, MF or HF frequencies;
- Cospas-Sarsat Emergency Position-Indicating Beacons (EPIRB);
- Inmarsat Terminal (Inmarsat B, Inmarsat C or Fleet F77);
- Radiotelephone on VHF, MF or HF frequencies.

2.3.3.3 Initiation of emergency phase radiocommunications using Digital Selective Calling (DSC)

The Digital Selective Calling (DSC) system is primarily intended for use as an alert system on VHF, MF or HF. In the GMDSS distress and safety traffic is always initiated using DSC. A distress alert contains essential basic information needed for the launch of maritime SAR actions in an easy-to-understand form. Whenever possible, the electronic positioning device (GPS or equivalent) should always be connected to the DSC device.

If the vessel is not equipped with a radio transmitter with a DSC, distress and safety traffic can be initiated using voice communication, provided that there is a coast station within communication range that watches the distress and safety frequency for voice communication in question.

The advantage of the DSC system is that the vessel's MMSI number, any position data and the type of assistance required are transmitted to the MRCC/MRSC radio systems as unambiguous data. This enables the correct targeting of assistance from the onset and tells responders who is in need of assistance. Another advantage of DSC is its longer range compared with voice transmission.

2.3.4 Emergency phase radio traffic

2.3.4.1 Prioritisation of distress and safety traffic

The procedures for distress and safety traffic are laid down in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations. When traffic is initiated in compliance with the Radio Regulations, the following order of priority is employed:

Distress and safety traffic	DSC priority category	Phrase in radio telephony	Prioritisation in radio telephony
Distress traffic	Distress alert	MAYDAY	Priority over all other traffic
Urgency traffic	Urgency announcement	PAN PAN	Priority over all other traffic excluding distress traffic
Safety traffic	Safety announcement	SECURITE	Priority over all other traffic excluding distress and urgency traffic
Routine . traffic	Routine call		No priority over other traffic

In the uncertainty and alert phases, maritime SAR emergency phase radiocommunications are conducted, where necessary, as urgency traffic and in the distress phase, where necessary, as distress or urgency traffic.

2.3.4.2 Distress traffic

Initiation of distress traffic by a vessel in distress

Distress traffic indicates that a vessel and its crew or other person is being threatened by grave and immediate danger and requires immediate assistance. Distress traffic can also be conducted in situations where there is one or more persons overboard. A vessel may only initiate distress traffic on the authority of the master or other person responsible for the vessel. In the event of a distress phase distress traffic must be initiated without delay.

Initiation of distress traffic on behalf of a vessel in distress and distress alert relay

A vessel must initiate distress traffic on behalf of a vessel in distress in the following cases:

- The vessel in distress cannot itself transmit a distress message.
- Further help is needed on the scene.
- The vessel in distress for some reason cannot conduct radiocommunication and the master of an assisting vessel believes further help is necessary. In such cases the vessel providing assistance must clearly indicate that it is not the vessel in distress.
- The vessel has received a DSC distress alert that has not been acknowledged by a MRCC/MRSC or other coast station within five minutes.

Distress traffic initiated by a vessel on behalf of another vessel using DSC should be addressed to the MRCC/MRSC.

The MRCC/MRSC must initiate distress traffic on behalf of a vessel in distress in the following cases:

- The vessel in distress cannot itself transmit a distress message.
- Further help is needed on the scene.
  In addition:
- Once a distress alert has been received from a vessel, the MRCC/MRSC must, following acknowledgment, transmit a distress alert relay.

- Where a vessel in distress has for some other reason not initiated distress traffic although the person responsible for MRCC/MRSC distress radio traffic regards this as necessary.

Transmission of situation reports in distress traffic

The MRCC/MRSC coordinating distress traffic must, where necessary, transmit regular situation reports as part of distress traffic.

Advantages of distress traffic in comparison with routine traffic

- The procedures for distress traffic are laid down in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations and everyone must comply with them.
- All other transmissions will cease on the channel during distress traffic.
- Distress traffic obliges others to keep a listening watch at least until it has been made sure that assistance is rendered.
- Distress traffic obliges everyone to take the measures necessary in the situation.
- Distress traffic is public and not covered by the confidentiality of communications.
- In distress traffic the statutory powers vested in the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) apply and the legal status of those assigned SAR tasks is clearer.

Distress traffic is coordinated by the MRCC/MRSC (or other coast station) that acknowledges the distress message.

Cancellation of an inadvertent distress alert

An inadvertent distress alert is a distress alert transmitted using DSC, an Inmarsat terminal or EPIRB (or PLB or ELT) accidentally or unintentionally in a situation where no vessel or person is in distress. The vessel that has inadvertently initiated a distress alert must, immediately upon having noticed this, cancel the inadvertent transmission. Because a vessel may only transmit a distress alert on the authority of the master of the vessel, the master is also responsible for the cancellation of distress traffic. An inadvertent distress alert must be cancelled in a manner ensuring the stations that may have received the distress alert will also receive the cancellation. The procedure carried out to perform the cancellation depends on the procedure used to transmit the inadvertent distress alert.

Detailed instructions on how to cancel an inadvertent distress alert can be found in Annex 3.

2.3.4.3 Urgency traffic

Urgency traffic indicates that the station has a very urgent message to transmit concerning the safety of a vessel or person but the situation is not a distress phase. Examples of issues communicated through an urgency message include:

- report on a missing vessel;
- a red flare detected;
- an unclear distress signal;
- a vessel reporting its maneuvring difficulties in an area with a high traffic volume;
- a vessel reports its problems when it is not yet in actual distress;
- a person has suffered a serious health incident or accident and there is a need for urgent medical care or access to the telemedical assistance service (previously referred to as telemedico or radiomedical).

A vessel may only initiate urgency traffic on the authority of the master or other person responsible for the vessel.

2.3.4.4 Safety traffic

Safety traffic is employed to transmit a message concerning an important navigational warning. Safety messages can be transmitted by coast stations and vessels.

Safety messages are classified as navigational and weather warnings. Navigational warnings provide information about issues such as a beacon light being off, a displaced navigation aid or an obstacle in a fairway. Weather warnings include storm, wind and icing warnings.

A vessel may only initiate safety traffic on the authority of the master or other person responsible for the vessel.

Further instructions on distress traffic procedures using VHF, MF and HF frequency bands and Inmarsat equipment can be found in Annex 3.

3 FUNCTIONING OF THE MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE SYSTEM

3.1 Situation awareness

The MRCC/MRSCs maintain continuous situation awareness regarding the situation in their respective Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRS). This situation awareness consists of basic information, position and preparedness data on SRUs, register data, Maritime SAR Plans and maritime and air situation pictures of the SRS. Basic situation awareness also includes the up-to-date contact details of other maritime SAR authorities, volunteer associations and other organisations.
For the Border Guard to maintain constant response preparedness, it needs to receive from the other maritime SAR authorities preparedness and position data for their SRUs in real time. The transmission of this data can take place through technical arrangements such as via the public authority radio network or through separate reports. To enable the efficient monitoring of maritime SAR resources, the maritime SAR authorities must submit to the relevant MRCC/MRSC the details of their SRUs' performance capacity, equipment, preparedness and any changes to these. To ensure the appropriate arrangement of maritime SAR services, volunteer associations and other organisations participating in maritime SAR must also submit corresponding information about their units. The basic file is primarily maintained using the Maritime SAR Information System maintained by the Border Guard.

The MRCC/MRSCs must have access to the following up-to-date information regarding their SRS:

- location, qualities, performance capacity, preparedness and availability of SRUs and other resources (such as special equipment and personnel);
- the properties, performance capacity, routes and schedules of vessels in regular service;
- maritime traffic;
- weather and ice situation and forecasts and warnings;
- available communication connections, phone numbers, frequencies, call signs and identities and watch hours;
- boat register data, properties and identifiers of boat types.

In emergency phases the basic situation awareness creates the starting point for the real-time awareness created to support mission coordination. Emergency phase situation awareness is primarily accessible by the MRCC/MRSCs in the Maritime SAR Information System. In addition to the MRCC/MRSC with coordination responsibility in the situation, this also keeps the other centres constantly aware of events within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR) and helps maintain high preparedness for provision of support if necessary. Emergency phase situation awareness provides information about at least the following issues:

- the basic operational idea and situation assessments;
- the type of emergency phase and the development of the situation;
- information about the vessel in distress and the shipowner;
- the coordination structure and the grouping of subsidiary levels of coordination and units and any changes to them;
- measures taken by the MRCC/MRSC, assigned to subsidiary levels and taken by neighbouring centres and their phase of performance;
- progress made in SAR operations;
- the number and identities of located and rescued persons, their health status, location site as well as their transfer further to an evacuation or care location;
- the number and identities, if available, of persons involved in the incident or being searched for;
- details of objects related to the incident found, their descriptions, location sites and times.

The MRCC/MRSCs also collect information regarding persons still missing in conjunction with a maritime SAR emergency phase within the SRS, the circumstances related to their disappearance and the SAR measures conducted for the purpose of any later continuation of search and the follow-on measures, investigation and statistics regarding the case.

3.2 Maritime Search and Rescue Plans

Coast Guard Districts must have an up-to-date Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) Plan regarding the use and coordination of resources in their Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) and the harmonisation of functions in different emergency phases. The plan must be constantly accessible by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC). The Maritime SAR Plan is based on a situation assessment that covers the variety of incident risks and access to resources available to the SAR services in the area in order to search for and rescue persons in danger. When drawing up and maintaining the Maritime SAR Plan, agreements are made with the other maritime SAR authorities in the SRS and with volunteer organisations about their participation in maritime SAR services.

The Maritime SAR Plan must cover at least:

- the grouping and coordination structures of the SRUs, coordination and management levels and other bodies;
- the division of maritime SRUs by function and the policy regarding their mobilisation and use in different emergency phases and incidents;
- detailed lists of measures to be taken for the launch of SAR activity without delay in different emergency phases;
- the measures to be taken and instructions regarding requests for further help and materials in the event of a major accident;
- the communication connections to be used during emergency phases and instructions on the communication procedure;
- instructions on cooperation with others participating in the activity;
- instructions on cooperation with neighbouring states;
- instructions on the authorisation and reporting procedure followed when a government vessel or aircraft participates in maritime SAR in Finland's territorial waters or airspace.

The MRCC/MRSC must have a separate plan for the use of national resources and resources alerted from other countries and issues such as SPOC activity. The SRC's Maritime SAR Plans are approved by the SRS's Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC).

3.3 The Maritime Search and Rescue Register

The Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) Register is a personal data file maintained using the Maritime SAR Information System. The register is maintained by the Border Guard Headquarters but mainly used by the MRCC/MRSCs. Data filed in the register may include Maritime SAR Plans, information about distress messages received and measures taken in response to them to the extent allowed by the Maritime Search and Rescue Act.

Under the Act, details of SRUs and their personnel included in Maritime SAR Plans can be filed in the register to maintain maritime SAR preparedness. Information that can be filed in the register concerning distress messages received includes the personal and contact details of persons who have submitted a distress message, identification data of the subscriber connection and location data of the terminal device from which the call was placed or which the call pertains to as well as information on the subsciber, user and installation address. The name of the person who received the distress message and other identification and contact details can also be filed in the Maritime SAR Register.

Information regarding emergency phases that can be filed in the Maritime SAR Register include the data necessary to identify the person(s) the distress message was about or who were rescued from the emergency phase, data on their health status if this can be assumed to be of significance to the appropriate conduct of SAR measures, and data on measures conducted on rescued persons during transport.

Also filed in the Maritime SAR Register is data on the measures taken in response to a distress message, including justifications. Recordings or corresponding technical records of the distress message are retained in conjunction with other register data or as separate records.

Personal data must be removed from the Maritime SAR Register once its retaining is no longer justified for maritime SAR purposes. Personal data other than that related to the maintenance of maritime SAR preparedness must, however, be removed from the register no later than within ten years of the event. The provisions of the Personal Data Act (523/1999) apply to the processing of personal data in the Maritime SAR Register unless otherwise provided for under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act.

Attention must be paid in data maintenance to cooperation between different authorities, agencies and business organisations in order to avoid overlapping files and to facilitate and speed up file usability.

The MRCC also maintains active working contacts with international vessel registers, other MRCCs in the Baltic Sea area, the Cospas-Sarsat System, other necessary national registers and coordination centres maintained by other maritime SAR authorities and with the international network for exchange of information between MRCCs. Where necessary, such information will be submitted by the MRCC to the MRSCs.

3.4 Coordination

3.4.1 Division of coordination responsibility

The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSCs) coordinate SAR actions independently within their respective Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) or part thereof. The MRSCs must, however, keep the MRCC aware of the situation in their SRSs. Where necessary, decisions about the national division of resources and the allocation of national and international resources are made by MRCC Turku in situations where key national SRUs are needed simultaneously within the area of more than one SRS. To enable this, the MRSCs must always inform the MRCC when they alert national resources. The MRCC is the primary standby coordination centre for both of the MRSCs. MRSC Helsinki acts as the primary standby coordination centre for the MRCC.

The person in charge of the operational coordination of maritime SAR operations is the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) on duty at the time in accordance with the shift schedule in each SRS. The SMC determines which emergency phase is at hand and is responsible for ensuring the centre responsible takes the actions required by the situation. The SMC is assisted by the other personnel of the MRCC/MRSC. The SMC is responsible for searches for and rescue of persons in danger at sea. In most cases the SMC is also responsible for media relations. If so required by the situation, however, the Coast Guard District must have sufficient preparedness to appoint a designated organisation for media relations.

Within the scope of their powers, the SMC may order persons to provide assistance and equipment and supplies for use in maritime SAR operations. Where necessary, the SMC appoints an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC), On-Scene Management Team and an Aircraft Coordinator (ACO). Decisions regarding the suspension and termination of SAR measures are also made by the SMC. On the basis of their powers, the SMC is independently liable for their decisions. Despite the SMC's independent powers, actions in response to emergency phases are primarily based on operating models formulated in advance and compiled under the Maritime SAR Plan.

The MRCC is always manned with a minimum staff of two persons. The SMC is assisted by a minimum of one operator, who is responsible for communications. This basic staff takes care of the majority of maritime SAR coordination duties. The response preparedness of the MRCC/MRSCs is backed up by constant preparedness at the Coast Guard

Headquarters. If necessary, the entire key staff of the Headquarters can quickly be mobilised for maritime SAR duties.

During a maritime SAR emergency phase the role of the SMC can be passed on from one person to another in contexts such as prolonged search or rescue operations. This should not, however, take place during response to an acute distress phase unless necessary to secure sufficient functional capacity. On the other hand, the duty must be passed on to another person before the person acting as the SMC becomes exhausted. When passing the duties on, the SMC assuming responsibility for the role must acquaint themselves with the situation carefully and thoroughly before assuming the responsibilities of the role. The maritime SAR mission situation, plan, available resources, their duties and restrictions and the measures taken must be covered unambiguously and the switchover of the SMC's role must be documented. Decisions on SMC switchover in the middle of a distress phase are made by the Search and Rescue Co-Ordinator (SC), their deputy or the Chief of the MRCC/MRSC in question.

The Commander of the Coast Guard District (or their deputy) is responsible in all situations for the delivery of maritime SAR in their SRS. In emergency phases that call for large-scale response activity, the Commander chairs the SRS Management Board and this way as the overall leader of the operation creates the best possible operational conditions for the SMC to succeed in SAR coordination. The Commander plays a particularly important role as a maritime SAR leader in situations where exceptional or extra resources are needed. As the chair of the SRS Management Board the Commander also participates actively in in the harmonisation of the activities of the maritime SAR authorities, volunteer associations and other organisations and provision of decision-making support to the SMC.

Both the On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) and the Aircraft Coordinator (ACO) have power of command over the SRUs and other units assigned to operate under them.

3.4.2 Initiation of SAR action

Depending on the emergency phase at hand, the MRCC/MRSCs initiate action in accordance with their Maritime SAR Plans as follows:

In the **uncertainty phase** there is uncertainty about a person's safety at sea or another reason to take measures to assess whether there is any need for assistance. Upon the declaration of this phase, the MRCC/MRSC initiates inquiries to determine whether there are persons in distress. In this phase the mobilisation readiness of SRUs can also be raised, but the situation does not yet necessarily call for the use of SRUs.

In the **alert phase** a person's safety at sea can be assumed to have been compromised or inquiries made due to the uncertainty phase have been unsuccessful. The MRCC/MRSC expands the coverage of inquiries and initiates the necessary search action to determine whether the distress phase should be declared and prepares to initiate any necessary rescue action. In the alert phase coordination readiness is raised and SRUs are alerted for the mission.

In the **distress phase** it is apparent that a person is in danger at sea and in need of immediate assistance. The MRCC/MRSC takes all the necessary action to save human lives that is possible and appropriate with the resources available. The initiation of distress radio traffic helps maximise the speed of response by vessels and aircraft available for SAR action and facilitate coordination capacities. The mobilisation of SRUs takes place in a front-loaded manner and measures are taken to prepare to mobilise additional resources.

The MRCC/MRSCs must also notify the Police coordination centre or department determined on the basis of the Police area responsibility principle of a SAR operation where it its likely that the operation will need to be continued as a Police-led search for missing persons once the SAR operation has been completed.

Maritime assistance tasks are not maritime SAR tasks even if maritime SRUs are used for them. The purpose of assistance tasks is to help people in situations that are not maritime SAR emergency phases but in which external help is necessary and there is no other appropriate source of help available. As a rule, assistance tasks are conducted alongside other activity through the targeting of units and patrols on duty.

The appropriate, speedy and efficient initiation and conduct of maritime SAR operations require that the MRCC/MRSCs actively gather information from all available sources during emergency phases. The primary objective of such gathering of information is to facilitate the precise location of a person who is possibly in need of assistance at sea and the determination of their need of assistance.

For the purpose of maritime SAR preparedness planning and during emergency phases, the Border Guard has the right to obtain necessary information including the following from other authorities in order to be able to perform its duties:

- details of vehicles, vehicle owners and holders contained in the Vehicle and Driver Data Registers of the road traffic data system maintained by the *Transport Safety Agency* and the Vehicle Register of the Government of Åland;
- data regarding distress messages and emergency phases as well as *preparedness and location data on authorities operating at sea* contained in the *Emergency Response Centre data system*, including the Police assignment report register;
- details of aircraft, aircraft owners and holders contained in the *Finnish Aircraft Register maintained by the Transport Safety Agency and the Emergency Locator Transmitter Register maintained by the air traffic service provider*;
- data on vessels and vessel and cargo traffic from municipal port authorities;
- data on fishing vessels, their owners and holders and data on vessel functionality from fishing authorities;
- data on vessels, their owners and holders from vessel registers maintained by the Transport Safety Agency and the Government of Åland and other registers maintained by the Transport Safety Agency;
- data on vessel traffic from the Vessel Traffic Service System maintained by the Finnish Transport Agency and data related to maritime surveillance from the Defence Forces;
- data on positions of radio equipment, and on radio equipment, its owners and holders contained in the register of radio licences, from the Finnish Communications Regulatory Agency (FICORA);
- data on vessel and cargo traffic from the data system of Finnish Customs;
- data referred to in sections 4 and 5 of the Population Information Act (507/1993)* from the Population Information System of the Population Register Centre;

  (*= The act is now titled ”the act on the Population Information System and the certificate services of the Population Register Center” (661/2009/661), with sections 13–17 containing the corresponding provisions.)

- weather and navigational data and related forecasts from the Finnish Meteorological Institute.

According to the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, data contained in the Border Guard's Border Management Register can be used where necessary during emergency phases to deliver SAR action.

Appropriate attendance to maritime SAR duties may also call for access to various types of information regarding persons and vessels in danger held by certain private companies and organisations. Therefore, during maritime SAR emergency phases and in the context

of preparedness planning, the Border Guard has the right to obtain free of charge details of vessels and their crews, passengers and cargo from shipping companies, boating organisations, travel, cargo, port and rescue service operators and shipbuilding companies that are necessary for the performance of maritime SAR duties.

The MRCC/MRSC has the right during emergency phases to obtain from telecommunications operators identification data of the subscriber connection and location data of the terminal device from which an emergency call was placed or that it pertains to as well as information on the subsciber, user and installation address. Therefore telecommunications operators are obliged to disclose to the MRCC/MRSC the identification data of the subscriber connection from which the call was placed or which it pertains to and information on the subsciber, user and installation address of the subscriber connection as well as the known position of the mobile device from which an emergency call was made. The operator must also disclose the known position of the mobile device of a person about whom a distress message has been sent if the subscription user is, according to the SMC's justified view, apparently in distress or immediate danger at sea.

3.4.3 Principles of use and operations of SRUs

Units are used for SAR actions on the basis of the nature and urgency of the emergency phase. SRUs' equipment, the level of training of their personnel and their suitability with regard to the area, the level of demandingness of the conditions and the mission as well as their estimated time of arrival affect the choice of units used and alerted. Units primarily used for basic-level emergency medical services are SAR helicopters on call that are most suitable for such missions in terms of their equipment and crew.

The mobilisation of SRUs takes place in a frontloaded manner. In the use of resources it is first ensured that there is access to sufficient SAR resources for the mission and, secondly, decisions are made on the scale of unit usage and mobilisation of further resources to make sure there will also be sufficient resources for SAR response to any other simultaneous emergency phases. A unit that has been alerted must inform the MRCC/MRSC of its estimated time of departure and arrival to the scene. The appropriate MRCC/MRSC must also be informed without delay if the unit cannot participate in the SAR operation.

The SRU must also show initiative in taking any necessary and possible measures required by the situation in order to save those in danger. The appropriate MRCC/MRSC must be notified without delay of the emergency phase and the measures taken in response.

Once they have been alerted, SRUs must operate in compliance with the SMC's orders and instructions. The SMC assigns individual tasks for each SRU. The assignment usually contains information about the scene, the coordination structure and the communication method used, a description of the target of search or rescue, information about the type of assistance required by those in danger and, if necessary, the search area and method.

All or only some of the SRUs participating in the mission can also be ordered to operate under the On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) or Aircraft Coordinator (ACO). If the SMC appoints an OSC or ACO, all SRUs participating in the operation must be informed of this as soon as possible.

The Border Guard's own aircraft are primarily used for maritime SAR flights. Other Finnish aircraft are alerted to participate in accordance with the instructions valid at the time. Foreign aircraft are alerted via the MRCC of the country in question. Requests for support are also provided for the information of the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC).

Once the search is completed, the SMC must be informed so that the SMC can assign the SRUs best suited for the rescue work and other necessary help to the scene. Units performing rescue work must constantly keep the SMC aware of the progress made and immediately inform the SMC if any further assistance is required.

An SRU may suspend or terminate a SAR duty assigned to it only if authorised by the SMC in question. The SMC/OSC/ACO in question must be informed immediately if an SRU has to deviate from the task assigned to it.

3.4.4 Isolation of a scene

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) may temporarily prohibit access to the sea area on which a SAR mission takes place and restrict access if this is necessary to secure the efficient performance of SAR operations and to avoid further emergency phases. Before making a decision regarding public fairways, the SMC must, in order to organise traffic control, consult the maritime authority responsible within the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) area. In the VTS area referred to in the Vessel Traffic Service Act, decisions regarding the isolation of an SAR area are made by the VTS authority following proposal by the SMC. The VTS authority may also otherwise temporarily order a water area or fairway to be closed off fully or in part and impose speed limits in the area or fairway.

The SMC may request the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority to prohibit, within the scope of its powers, access to the airspace in which the SAR mission takes place or restrict access if this is necessary to secure the efficient performance of SAR operations.

The scene should be isolated to secure the success of SAR actions in all major accidents and otherwise with regard to airspace if several aircraft are employed in SAR, aircraft activity is prolonged or if so required by particularly demanding or crowded conditions.

The needs of the Accident Investigation Board must always be determined before isolation is discontinued. To secure accident investigations, the Accident Investigation Board may issue orders regarding the isolation of an area or target or prohibit the transport of those deceased in the accident within or out of the area.

3.4.5 Maritime SAR-related Maritime Assistance Services and Telemedical Assistance Services

The purpose of the Maritime Assistance Services (MAS) is to both facilitate contacts by foreign and domestic commercial vessels with local authorities and increase the efficiency of the systematic processing of information provided by vessels in emergency phases less serious than accidents. At the same time the MAS provide the maritime SAR services with better opportunities for anticipatory increase of preparedness in situations that may potentially develop into emergency phases.

In accordance with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) recommendations, MAS in Finland are produced at MRCC Turku.

Telemedical Assistance Services (TMAS, formerly also called ”Radio Medical” or ”TEMECO”), are part of maritime SAR services in which health care authorities also participate. The definition of TMAS is based on the provisions laid down by the ILO Convention concerning Health Protection and Medical Care for Seafarers and by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). According to the definition of the term, TMAS only means urgent medical consultations that cannot be provided through the regular health care system.

In Finland the MRCC/MRSCs relay, primarily via satellite and mobile phone systems, urgent calls made by seafarers to designated emergency physicians on call, from whom those in need for assistance receive the necessary treatment instructions and the medical risk assessment required in the situation. If a vessel does not have a satellite or mobile phone, the TMAS can also be accessed via the maritime SAR VHF or MF frequencies. This, however, is not the primary method of transmission for the TMAS because the

MRCC/MRSC cannot put these calls through to the physician directly via the telephone network.

3.4.6 Suspension and termination of operations

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) may temporarily suspend the search or rescue operation if appropriate SAR actions are prevented by the prevailing conditions. The suspension must be negotiated with the Search and Rescue Co-Ordinator (SC) or their deputy. The reasons for the suspension must be entered in full in the Maritime SAR Information System. Actions must be resumed once the obstacle no longer exists. In individual cases the SC or their deputy may exercise their right to decide upon the matter.

The SMC makes the decision to terminate SAR activity when it has been established on the basis of inquiries made and search measures performed that there is no need for further measures or once all those in danger have been located and rescued. The SMC may also decide to terminate a search when it has become apparent that there is no longer justified hope of finding any more survivors. In such cases, before a decision is made to terminate SAR activity, the MRCC/MRSC must notify the Police coordination centre or department determined on the basis of the Police area responsibility principle of the planned termination so that it can make preparations for a possible search for missing persons and to agree upon any transfer of coordination responsibility.

The SMC must ensure that the decision to suspend or terminate SAR operations must be communicated immediately to all units, coordination and management levels and key stakeholders by sending the international expression for distress traffic cessation in accordance with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations and in any other appropriate manner.

3.5 Fees and compensations

The state will pay persons who upon an order by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) has assisted in a maritime SAR task a reasonable fee and compensate for the costs incurred. The state will also pay compensation for tools, clothing and equipment that have been damaged or lost in such a duty. The state will pay full compensation for property that has been taken into use upon the SMC's order and for property that has been damaged, lost or destroyed. The MRCC/MRSC informs the persons ordered for the task about the method to be used to apply for compensation.

The state will pay fees and compensation for costs incurred to volunteer associations or other organisations under the same principles as to private persons or as agreed with the organisation in question. The payment of a fee and compensation for costs is subject to the condition that the Border Guard has expressly assigned the task in question to the volunteer association or other organisation.

Applications for a fee or compensation must be submitted to the Border Guard using the designated form within three months of the date on which grounds for the payment of a fee or compensation occurred. The form must be submitted to the Border Guard in compliance with the up-to-date invoicing instructions.

Compensation for accidents during a maritime SAR task is paid in accordance with the principles applied to accidents at work where the person injured is not entitled to at least the same amount of compensation under another act of law.

If the employer of the injured person has paid the person pay or advance or other payments regarding the accident that is subject to compensation under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, the provisions of the Employment Accidents Insurance Act (608/48) on the employer's rights apply to the employer's rights.

The first instance for the processing of cases regarding payment of compensation for an accident by the state is the State Treasury.

3.6 Statistics and investigations

Material accrued during emergency phases and resulting measures must be retained at the MRCC/MRSCs for statistics and investigations as stipulated under the Border Guard's internal instructions. The purpose of statistics and investigations is to promote increased safety at sea and accident prevention and provide the foundation for maritime SAR development. The provisions of the Personal Data Act (523/1999) apply to the processing of personal data in the Maritime SAR Register.

Accidents in waterborne traffic are investigated as provided for in the Accident Investigation Act (373/1985). Maritime SAR services provide support to the Accident Investigation Board in the investigation of accidents as laid down in the Act and notifies the Board of every commercial shipping accident and emergency phase concerning a major accident within Finland's Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) as well as every accident involving a Finnish vessel outside Finland's SRR.

The Police are responsible for criminal investigations into accidents. The Border Guard supports the investigations to the extent necessary.

3.7 Saving of property

Maritime SAR actions focus on the search for and rescue of persons in danger at sea. Although the saving of property is not included in maritime SAR duties, SRUs may case-specifically also employ the saving of property as a means of safeguarding life, provided that in such a case the saving of property is the most feasible method of saving the person in danger.

The saving of property is primarily carried out by commercial rescue operators on the basis of a rescue agreement concluded with the master of the vessel, shipowner or insurance company. If a maritime SAR emergency phase or assistance task involves rescue or assistance regarding not only persons but also property, this only takes place until the nearest safe haven. From there onwards the owner of the vessel is responsible for any measures regarding the vessel and costs arising thereof.

To prevent considerable further loss or damage, maritime SAR units can be used in a limited manner to save property, including when there are no persons on board the vessel.

The responsibility of the master of the vessel is emphasised in the resctriction of loss or damage resulting from accidents. The master is always responsible for their vessel's safety and responsible for coordinating rescue action on board their vessel in all circumstances.

3.8 Release of public information

Release of information to the public is part of SAR operations and successful information provision can play a major role in the processing of the case. Release of information must not, however, violate the protection of privacy, so the rights of relatives and injured parties must be taken into consideration with great emphasis.

The provision of information about maritime SAR incidents depends on the level of seriousness and general interest of the incident. The release of information is initiated by the leading MRCC/MRSC. From then on the responsible Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC) or a person authorised by them is responsible for the provision of information about the case. The maritime SAR services are also responsible for general information provision about multimodal accidents as long as the case is about saving human lives. When the overall coordination responsibility is transferred to another authority, the responsibility for information provision is also transferred unless otherwise agreed case-

specifically. Alongside general information provision, each participant only releases information about its own actions as mutually agreed.

A more detailed description of the release of public information by maritime SAR authorities regarding maritime SAR incidents can be found in Annex 11.

4 COOPERATION

4.1 National cooperation

4.1.1 General

The Border Guard Headquarters takes care of the harmonisation of actions by authorities and volunteers participating in SAR at the national level in the Advisory Board on Maritime Search and Rescue Services. Cooperation is based on legislation pertaining to maritime SAR services and the duties and organisation of maritime SAR authorities as well as the rules and by-laws of volunteer associations and other organisations. Where necessary, cooperation between the Border Guard and other maritime SAR authorities and volunteer associations can be agreed upon in greater detail under separate cooperation agreements.

The Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) Management Board plays a key role in the harmonisation of the tasks of maritime SAR authorities and volunteer associations within the SRS. On one hand the SRS Management Board is tasked with assisting the Coast Guard District in the planning of maritime SAR services and on the other hand with supporting the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) in the harmonisation of actions by the different participants during emergency phases. The SRS Management Board is appointed and chaired by the Commander of the Coast Guard District. Members of the Management Board comprise representatives of authorities, volunteer associations and other organisations participating in maritime SAR within the SRS. SRS-specific agreements with all participants regarding the ways in which they participate in SAR operations are made under Maritime SAR Plans. Harmonisation means collaborative planning prior to the occurrence of an emergency phase. Actions during emergency phases are as decided by the SMC. In the context of multimodal accidents the Management Board helps enable flexible and efficient transfer of overall coordination responsibility after the saving of human lives in order to save the environment and property.

To increase the efficiency of the harmonisation of the actions by the different participants on the scene, the SMC may, where necessary, appoint a separate On-Scene Managment Team to assist the On-Scene Coordinator (OSC). This Management Team consists of experts from different sectors and its composition is decided specifically for each case.

It should be noted regarding the cooperation arrangements for multimodal accidents that as long as SAR actions aiming at the saving of human lives are underway, other rescue and response measures must be harmonised with them in the manner ordered by the SMC. Rescue actions in response to multimodal accidents are coordinated in accordance with the Maritime Search and Rescue Act for as long as the aim is to save human lives. Following this, overall coordination responsibility can be transferred to another relevant responsible authority, such as a rescue or environmental authority.

4.1.2 Cooperation with rescue authorities, Emergency Response Centres and social welfare and health care authorities

Rescue operations mean urgent tasks performed to protect and rescue persons, property and the environment, restrict damage and alleviate consequences in the event of or where threatened by incidents.

Distress phases referred to in the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, however, always involve maritime SAR operations in which rescue authorities must participate in the manner required by the situation. A fire on board a vessel at sea is also part of maritime SAR for which rescue service units can be used where necessary. It is only once persons on board have been rescued that the nature of the operation transforms into the saving of property. It should be noted in this context that the saving of human lives on board a vessel moored at a port is rescue activity, not maritime SAR.

Maritime SAR authorities participate in rescue activity under the Rescue Act as laid down regarding their tasks in the legislation issued for each sector. Provisions regarding the participation of the Border Guard in rescue operations are laid down in the Border Guard Act. If necessary, maritime SRUs can also be used for rescue and medical service tasks where appropriate and allowed by the situation at sea. Requests for assistance made to SAR services by rescue and medical authorities are submitted to the relevant MRCC/MRSC.

In addition to personnel, equipment and transport assistance, rescue operations can employ maritime SAR communication connections and information systems to support rescue responses. Where possible, support to rescue and medical services should be agreed in advance in the relevant SRS Management Board or under separate agreements.

The Emergency Response Centre conducts a risk assessment on calls received and, where necessary, passes messages pertaining to maritime SAR to the MRCC/MRSC responsible for SAR coordination. Where necessary, the Emergency Response Centres support the MRCC/MRSCs by alerting the resources necessary for the operation.

With regard to emergency medical services, the Border Guard participates in basic-level emergency medical services and lower-level care provision. Health care authorities are responsible for the provision of more demanding emergency medical services, telemedical assistance services (TMAS) and the production of risk assessments. Social welfare authorities are responsible for the provision of psychosocial assistance to rescued persons and their relatives.

4.1.3 Cooperation with aeronautical SAR services

Aeronautical SAR services are responsible for coordinating searches for aircraft that are missing or in danger. Aeronautical SAR services mean a set of services consisting of aviation search and rescue services where the service is targeted at an aircraft and support measures provided by Finavia Corporation for other authorities determined under agreements in accordance with the purchaser-provider model.

Following a request during an aviation emergency phase at or near sea areas, the MRCC/MRSC provides its expertise for use by the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) coordinating the operation. Maritime SAR services can also provide equipment and communication connections to support aeronautical SAR services in accident response. The ARCC alerts the relevant MRCC/MRSC, which then takes measures to provide assistance.

It should be noted regarding the division of responsibility that searches for and rescue of persons in danger at sea are the responsibility of maritime SAR services regardless of how the person ended up in danger. Therefore overall coordination responsibility for aviation accidents can be transferred to maritime SAR services once the ARCC has determined the search area at sea and a minimum of uncertainty phase has been declared under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act. The transfer of overall coordination responsibility always calls for exchange of information between the Aeronautical Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator and the maritime SMC and must promote the conduct of SAR operations. Even following a transfer of coordination responsibility, it is the task of aeronautical SAR services in the context of an aviation accident at sea to seek to make the search/rescue area more specific and assist maritime SAR services in the search for and rescue of persons in danger at sea.

Where aircraft are used in maritime SAR, the MRCC/MRSC with coordination responsibility determines the aircraft required. The MRCC/MRSC alerts the Border Guard's aircraft and assigns flight tasks directly to the flight units. Other aircraft are alerted in accordance with the instructions valid at the time.

A request for aircraft participation must include the following information:

- details of the incident (target, route, identifiers, number of persons to be rescued, etc.);
- estimate of amount and quality of assistance required;
- scene location (coordinates or grid reference);
- search area and subareas;
- number and types of vessels within the operation area;
- number and types of aircraft within the operation area;
- sea conditions and ice situation;
- estimate of visibility and cloud height within the operation area;
- calls and frequencies used.

The ARCC and the MRCC/MRSC agree with each other on the methods of contact and inform each other about available search units.

Where necessary, aeronautical SAR supports maritime SAR in aircraft coordination during a SAR operation.

4.1.4 Cooperation with the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

In the VTS area referred to in the Vessel Traffic Service Act, decisions regarding the isolation of the SAR area are made by the VTS authority following proposal by the SMC. The VTS authority may also otherwise temporarily order a water area or fairway to be closed off fully or in part and impose speed limits in the area or fairway.

The MRCC/MRSC informs the VTS centre of maritime SAR operations and exercises in or near the VTS area. If the SMC finds it necessary to temporarily prohibit or restrict access to the area on which the SAR mission takes place to secure the efficient performance of SAR operations and to avoid further emergency phases, the SMC must submit the matter to the VTS authority for decision-making. The VTS centre releases information about and supervises compliance with such prohibitions and restrictions.

The MRCC/MRSC also informs the VTS centre if vessels must reduce wave formation due to a maritime SAR operation underway in or near the VTS area. The VTS imposes and supervises a temporary speed limit on the area or fairway.

The VTS must inform the MRCC/MRSC immediately of any emergency phases it observes or becomes aware of (such as disabled vessels, observations of grounded vessels, floating lifebuoys, lifejackets or boat parts).

In the context of a distress incident, the VTS centre informs the MRCC/MRSC about the traffic situation and seafarers about SAR operations in or near the VTS area. The VTS centre can control traffic through traffic arrangements and, in special circumstances in accordance with a decision made by the VTS authority, by restricting access to or speed in the area or by ordering vessels to anchor or berth.

4.1.5 Cooperation with the Finnish Meteorological Institute and environmental authorities

The Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) produces wind and ice accretion warnings for sea areas and the Saimaa area as well as sea area-specific wind and visibility forecasts in Finnish, Swedish and English. Marine weather forecasts and warnings are broadcast on YLE Radio Suomi and Radio Vega frequencies and coast radio station Turku Radio's working channels. Observations, watched forecasts and warnings can also be accessed on the FMI website and via premium-rate service numbers and GSM and WAP services.

To maintain maritime SAR preparedness, the FMI and the Border Guard have created their joint weather portal through which the MRCC/MRSCs can constantly monitor developments in wind and weather conditions.

In the event of an incident at sea, it is important for the launch of the FMI's special services that the meteorologist on call is provided with initial information about the time, location and type of incident as soon as possible. In conjunction with the initial notification, the MRCC/MRSC can request the extra services it needs (observations, targeted forecasts, drift calculations and drift trajectory forecasts). The FMI also produces the aviation weather services needed in aeronautical SAR operations. In addition, the FMI provides maritime SAR services, as agreed, with access to products and services produced by other authorities.

The Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) is in charge of response to oil pollution and vessel chemical pollution and the national organisation and development of occupational further and continuing education in the field. It also takes care of the creation and maintenance of sufficient national preparedness for responses to vessel oil and chemical pollution.

SYKE is responsible for responses to vessel oil pollution and appoints the Response Commander (RC) if there has been or there is a threat of a vessel oil spill within Finland's waters on the high seas or within Finland's exclusive economic zone.

4.1.6 Cooperation with shipowners

Cooperation between the Border Guard and shipowners operating passenger ships is based on the SOLAS Regulation (SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 7.3) under which passenger ships must have on board a plan for cooperation with appropriate search and rescue services. The plan must be developed in cooperation between the ship, the company and the SAR services. To ensure cooperation, the Border Guard organises national or regional maritime SAR meetings with shipowners where necessary. If necessary, Border Guard representatives can also attend events organised by shipowners to present issues related to maritime SAR or cooperation. The Border Guard also provides shipowners' representatives with the opportunity to participate in On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) training. The content of OSC training is described in greater detail in Annex 7.

The above issues regarding cooperation between maritime SAR and SOLAS passenger vessels can also be applied, on a shipowner's initiative, to other vessels operating within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR).

The shipowner is responsible for the formulation of the cooperation plan between a SOLAS passenger ship and the maritime SAR services. The principles to be applied in plan formulation can be found in Annex 5. Each plan must be formulated in compliance with the up-to-date IMO Guidelines (MSC. 1(Circ. 1079). The more detailed structure of a cooperation plan can be found in Annex 6.

The Border Guard is responsible for drawing up the description of Finnish maritime SAR services for cooperation planning. The up-to-date description of maritime SAR services is available on the internet and from the MRCC/MRSCs. The description is delivered to shipowners in PDF format that can be attached to safety plans. When drawing up safety plans, shipowners must be in contact with the Border Guard in accordance with Annex 5 and agree on any further measures necessary.

The Border Guard informs the Finnish Transport Safety Agency about all cooperation plans received by the Border Guard. In conjunction with ship surveys and shipowner audits, maritime inspectors can inspect whether the cooperation plan between the vessel and the maritime SAR services is up-to-date.

4.1.7 Cooperation with volunteers participating in maritime SAR

As a rule, the local branches of the Finnish Lifeboat Institution only maintain preparedness during the open water season. Ålands sjöräddningssällskap maintains preparedness in Åland throughout the year. Local branches inform their area's MRCC/MRSC about the response preparedness of their SRUs. The MRCC/MRSCs maintain data on the alert and contact details of volunteer units. The MRCC/MRSCs can assign volunteer units SAR

tasks that do not involve a considerable amount of exercise of public power. A lifeboat institution vessel unit can perform a task on its own or together with another unit such as a Coast Guard patrol. In maritime SAR operations the vessel units of the Finnish Lifeboat Institution and, in Åland, those of Ålands sjöräddningssällskap operate under the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) or an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) appointed by the SMC. Further information about tasks performed by volunteers can be found in Annex 10.

4.1.8 Research related to maritime SAR

The Border Guard is responsible for the national coordination of research and testing activity related to maritime SAR. Others participating in maritime SAR, maritime institutes and seafarers can submit proposals to the maritime SAR services regarding research needed in maritime SAR on the basis of problems or development needs observed by them. Consequently, the research activity coordinated by the Border and Coast Guard Academy can contribute to the development of maritime safety together with investigations conducted by the Accident Investigation Board and maritime authorities.

4.1.9 Cooperation related to maritime SAR operations

The key tasks of the different authorities, shipowners and other participants in maritime SAR are presented in Annex 10.

4.2 International cooperation

4.2.1 Sweden

Maritime SAR cooperation with Sweden takes place in compliance with the 1993 agreement on maritime and aeronautical SAR between the countries. Under the agreement, the maritime and aeronautical SAR border between Finland and Sweden is the Flight Information Region (FIR) border between the countries. The countries have also made a commitment to the development of cooperation between their SAR services under the agreement. Cooperation covers issues including joint SAR exercises, regular testing of communication connections between the countries, mutual visits by SAR experts and exchange of information and experiences about SAR services. The countries have also undertaken to guarantee sufficient maritime and aeronautical SAR arrangements in the respective maritime Search and Rescue Region (SRR).

The authority responsible for maritime SAR in Sweden is the Swedish Maritime Administration. The MRCC for maritime and aeronautical SAR, Sweden Rescue, is located in Gothenburg. MRCC Gothenburg coordinates SAR operations throughout the Swedish SRR. Since the beginning of 2009 the coordination of aeronautical SAR was also included in the duties of the Maritime Administration.

Under the cooperation agreement between the countries, the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority (FINAVIA) and the Swedish Maritime Administration and the Swedish Civil Aviation Authority (Steria) have drawn up a protocol specifying the types of practical cooperation between the countries. According to the protocol, the harmonisation of maritime SAR operations takes place between the countries' MRCCs. MRSC Vaasa can also cooperate with MRCC Gothenburg during maritime SAR emergency phases in the Gulf of Bothnia.

4.2.2 Russia

Maritime SAR cooperation with Russia takes place in compliance with the 1993 agreement on maritime and aeronautical SAR between the countries. This agreement also specifies the Flight Information Region (FIR) border between the countries as the border for maritime and aeronautical SAR services. The content of the agreement corresponds to the corresponding agreement between Finland and Sweden.

The authority responsible for maritime SAR in Russia is the Ministry of Transport. The State Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Moscow coordinates maritime SAR at the national level but does not participate in operational coordination. The Ministry of Transport is also responsible for maritime safety and saving of property. MRCC St Petersburg is responsible for maritime SAR off the Gulf of Finland Coast of Russia. It does not have any MRSCs in the Baltic Sea.

Under the cooperation agreement between the countries, the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority (FINAVIA) and Federal Agency for Sea and Inland Water Transport and the Federal Air Transport Agency of the Russian Ministry of Transport have drawn up a protocol specifying the types of practical cooperation between the countries. According to the protocol, the harmonisation of maritime SAR operations takes place between the countries' MRCCs. MRSC Helsinki can also cooperate with MRCC St Petersburg during maritime SAR emergency phases in the Gulf of Finland.

4.2.3 Estonia

Maritime SAR cooperation with Estonia takes place in compliance with the 1998 agreement on maritime and aeronautical SAR between the countries. Under the agreement, the maritime and aeronautical SAR border between Finland and Estonia is the border between the Tampere and Tallinn Flight Information Regions (FIR). Otherwise the content of the agreement corresponds to the corresponding agreements concluded by Finland with Sweden and Russia.

The authority responsible for maritime SAR in Estonia is the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board. Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Tallinn (JRCC Tallinn) acts as the centre responsible for maritime and aeronautical SAR. JRCC Tallinn also has MRSCs along the coast.

Under the cooperation agreement between the countries, the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority (FINAVIA) and the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board have drawn up a protocol specifying the types of practical cooperation between the countries. According to the protocol, the harmonisation of maritime SAR operations takes place between the countries' MRCC/JRCC. MRSC Helsinki can also cooperate with JRCC Tallinn during maritime SAR emergency phases in the Gulf of Finland.

4.2.4 Other international cooperation

In addition to the above-mentioned bilateral agreements, the Hamburg Convention is applied in international SAR cooperation. Practical cooperation takes place in compliance with the principles specified in the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (the IAMSAR Manual) and other instructions adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The Border Guard participates actively in the international development of maritime SAR services in contexts such as the IMO and the EU where the focus is on the development of cooperation in the Baltic Sea area.

The Border Guard Headquarters is responsible for the organisation of contacts between Finland and other states and international maritime SAR organisations. MRCC Turku acts as the international SAR point of contact (SPOC) for Finnish maritime SAR services. In the context of this duty it, for example, receives and, where necessary, passes on to other authorities requests for assistance and alerts received from abroad or via the Cospas-Sarsat System and is the national provider of information about Finnish vessels in distress abroad.

5 MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINING SYSTEM

The Finnish training system related to maritime SAR coordination has been created in compliance with the principles laid down in the IAMSAR Manual. The Border Guard provides coordination training related to maritime SAR and may, if necessary, also provide other maritime SAR training and education. The Border and Coast Guard Academy is the unit within the Border Guard responsible for the practical implementation of maritime SAR training.

Authorities participating in maritime SAR train their own personnel primarily with a view to their statutory duties. In their capacity as maritime SAR authorities they must participate in maritime SAR by contributing their own special expertise. This cooperation calls for knowledge of the requirements set by maritime SAR, on which the Border Guard is the special expert. The parties enter into mutual agreements about the training required and the manners in which it is provided.

Volunteer associations and other organisations operating in the field of maritime SAR participate in maritime SAR as agreed by them with the Border Guard. Each association or organisation takes care of its personnel's training for tasks under the agreement by agreeing, where necessary, with the Border Guard on training provision.

The Border and Coast Guard Academy takes care of the planning and implementation of maritime SAR training provided by the Border Guard in accordance with the objectives set by the Border Guard Headquarters and, in this context, also participates in the development of maritime SAR operating models and equipment.

Maritime SAR training is provided under a module structure at the Border and Coast Guard Academy. Each model is as such a part of basic or further training included in the Border Guard's personnel training. The same teaching modules are also used as part of continuing training. A list of the teaching modules included in the maritime SAR training system can be found in Annex 7. Training to maintain occupational competence is provided for by separate revision modules designed for the purpose or by re-taking a module or a practical component of a module at specific intervals. Training opportunities available outside the Border Guard are also utilised in teaching.

Where necessary, maritime SAR training is also provided for those not included in Border Guard personnel. Such persons may include personnel of other maritime SAR authorities, members of volunteer associations and other organisations participating in maritime SAR, deck officers of commercial vessels, shipowners' security personnel and personnel of foreign authorities responsible for maritime SAR. Training provided for non-Border Guard personnel focuses mainly on the basics of maritime SAR and the tasks of heads of SRUs and One-Scene Coordinators (OSCs).

As well as through training, the performance of the maritime SAR system is developed and maintained through continuous practice. Cooperation exercises at various levels of maritime SAR are organised annually in all SRSs. The Border Guard Headquarters provides instructions and monitors the organisation, quality and scope of exercises. If necessary, shipowners' commercial vessels and their crews are also allowed the opportunity to participate in exercises. In addition to national maritime SAR exercises, Finnish maritime SAR services also participate in international cooperation exercises.

6 USE OF INTERNATIONAL DISTRESS SIGNALS

According to the SOLAS Convention, the use of an international distress signal by any vessel or aircraft, except for the purpose of indicating that a person or persons are in distress, and the use of any signal which may be confused with an international distress signal is prohibited. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, hereafter 'the Rules of the Road at Sea', also lay down provisions regarding international distress signals and their use. The distress signals are presented in greater detail in Annex 8.

Under the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, the use of an international distress signal or any signal which may be confused with an international distress signal is prohibited for any purpose other as a distress signal during a distress phase. A Coast Guard District may, however, authorise the use of certain international distress signals for exercise purposes in a location other than a vessel or aircraft within its Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS) or coastal municipalities directly adjacent to it. Such distress signals comprise:

1. rocket parachute flare, hand flare or flare pen gun showing a red light;
2. smoke signal giving off orange-coloured smoke.

Authorisation for the use of such distress signals elsewhere in the country may be issued by the Police. Authorisation is subject to the condition that there is no risk of unnecessary SAR operations being launched due to the activity and that the activity does not compromise safety.

The organiser of an event to practice the use of distress signals is responsible for ensuring that the exercise leader has the sufficient skills and capabilities required for the handling of distress signal devices and for organising the event safely.

The use of the following distress signals for exercise purposes nationwide, including on board vessels and aircraft, may be authorised by a Coast Guard District:

1. Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB);
2. Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT); and
3. Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).

The authority issuing the authorisation must ensure that the relevant authorities and, where necessary, the authorities of neighbouring countries, are informed about the authorisation granted. Those at sea must also be informed about the authorisation via a coast radio station and other members of the public via a message from the authorities transmitted via the media.

Maritime Rescue Act (1145/2001)

In accordance with a decision of Parliament be it enacted as follows:

Section 1

Scope of Application

This Act applies to the search and rescue of persons in distress within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region, the provision of emergency medical services for them and the conduct of radiocommunications related to an emergency phase (*maritime search and rescue services*). This Act also lays down provisions regarding the authorities responsible for maritime safety radiocommunications, the provision of Telemedical Assistance Services for vessels, Maritime Assistance Services, the use of certain emergency signalling devices being subject to authorisation, and emergency medical services at sea.

This Act does not apply to rescuing human life onboard a vessel tied up to the shore at a port.

Separate provisions apply to salvaging a vessel and its cargo as well as combating oil and chemical pollution by vessels.

Section 2

Terms and definitions

For the purpose of this Act:

1) emergency phase is:

a) a situation in which there is uncertainty about a person's safety at sea or otherwise reason to take measures to assess whether there is any need for assistance;

b) a situation in which a person's safety at sea can be assumed to have been compromised or in which inquiries made to assess the situation have been unsuccessful;

c) a situation where it is apparent that a person is in danger at sea and in need of immediate assistance;

2) *Search and Rescue Unit (SRU)* is a vessel or aircraft with a crew trained and equipped for maritime search and rescue operations;

3) *Search and Rescue Region (SRR)* is the maritime area that comprises Finland's territorial waters, the islands therein and the parts of international waters directly adjacent to the territorial waters on which Finland has agreed specifically with the neighbouring states;

4) *Search and Rescue Sub-Region (SRS)* is a sub-region within the Search and Rescue Region that usually comprises the operating area of the Coast Guard District in question and other areas of the Search and Rescue Region in its vicinity as agreed or ordered more specifically on the matter and in which the Coast Guard District in question is responsible for maritime search and rescue;

5) *Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC)* is a designated Coast Guard coordination centre that acts as the Finnish national Search and Rescue Region's coordination centre and the international point of contact for Finnish maritime search and rescue services and that takes care of the continuous maintenance of

coordination and communication preparedness and coordinates search and rescue operations within its Search and Rescue Sub-Region;

6) *Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC)* is a separately designated Coast Guard coordination or other centre that either independently or subordinate to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre takes care of the continuous maintenance of coordination and communication preparedness and coordinates search and rescue operations within its Search and Rescue Sub-Region or other separately designated area;

7) *Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre* is collective term used for the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre and the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres;

8) *Search and Rescue Coordinator (SC)* is a Coast Guard commander responsible for maritime search and rescue arrangements for a Search and Rescue Sub-Region;

9) *Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC)* is a Border Guard officer of a Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre with special training for the duty and tasked with the coordination of search and rescue operations;

10) *On-Scene Coordinator (OSC)* is a person whose duty is to coordinate and harmonise on-scene search and rescue operations under the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator;

11) *Aircraft Coordinator (ACO)* is a person whose duty is to coordinate and harmonise on-scene aeronautical search and rescue operations;

12) *multimodal accident* is an accident or emergency phase in which there is the risk of loss of human life and also of loss or damage to the environment, vessel, her cargo or other property;

13) *emergency medical services* are the branch of medical services responsible for providing acute medical care to patients primarily outside health care institutions and, where necessary, the transport of patients to the most appropriate health care unit;

14) *safety radiocommunications* are radiocommunications used in order to protect or save human life or property;

15) *Maritime Assistance Services (MAS)* is a communication link service that supports maritime search and rescue preparedness planning and prevention of maritime emergency phases and accidents and serves as a national point of contact for vessels for assistance needs and exchanges of information;

16) *Telemedical Assistance Service (TMAS)* is the provision of urgent medical services, including specialist services, for vessels at sea via a satellite or mobile phone network;

17) *COSPAS-SARSAT System* is an international satellite system for search and rescue used for the transmission of distress messages sent by emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), emergency locator transmitters (ELTs) or personal locator beacons (PLBs) via a satellite link.

Section 3

Leading maritime search and rescue authority

The Border Guard shall be the leading maritime search and rescue authority and responsible for the provision of maritime search and rescue services. In this purpose it shall:

1) see to the planning, development and supervision of maritime search and rescue services as well as the harmonisation of the activities of authorities and volunteers participating in maritime search and rescue;

2) lead and conduct search and rescue operations;

3) be responsible for emergency phase-related radiocommunications and the provision of Telemedical Assistance Services for vessels;

4) participate in emergency phase prevention;

5) be in charge of the Maritime Assistance Services;

6) be responsible for receiving distress alerts sent within the COSPAS-SARSAT System using emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), emergency locator transmitters (ELTs) and personal locator beacons (PLBs) and for relaying them to the national responsible party as well as the national harmonisation of issues related to the COSPAS-SARSAT System;

7) provide coordination and management training related to maritime search and rescue services and, where necessary, also other training and public education related to maritime search and rescue.

Section 4

Other authorities and actors participating in maritime search and rescue

In addition to the Border Guard, the Emergency Response Service Administration, the Finnish Meteorological Institute, the regional rescue department referred to in the Rescue Act (468/2003), the Finnish Transport Safety Agency, the Finnish Transport Agency, the Police, the Finnish Defence Forces, social welfare and health care authorities, Finnish Customs and environmental authorities (*other maritime search and rescue authorities*) shall have the duty to participate free of charge in maritime search and rescue operations where this is justifiable on the basis of the duties included in their scope of activity or where this is necessary considering the seriousness or special nature of the emergency phase and where the performance of such maritime search and rescue duties does not considerably compromise the performance of the authority's other important statutory duties.

The maritime search and rescue duties of the other maritime search and rescue authorities are shall be follows:

1) the Emergency Response Service Administration shall participate in the alerting of Search and Rescue Units and personnel participating in maritime search and rescue missions as separately agreed;

2) the Finnish Transport Safety Agency shall be responsible for vessel safety and its development and provide the Border Guard with access to expertise within its field;

3) the Finnish Meteorological Institute shall provide the Border Guard with access to expertise within its field and produce for the Border Guard the weather and oceanographic services required for maritime search and rescue services;

4) the Finnish Transport Agency shall maintain the Vessel Traffic Service referred to in the Vessel Traffic Service Act (623/2005) and participate in search and rescue operations by providing access to its personnel and equipment;

5) the regional rescue departments, the Police and Finnish Customs shall participate in search and rescue operations by providing access to their personnel and equipment;

6) the Finnish Defence Forces shall survey the sea areas to detect and locate accidents and emergency phases in conjunction with surveillance of territorial integrity and participate in search and rescue operations by providing access to their special expertise, personnel and equipment;

7) social welfare and health care authorities shall be responsible for the provision of emergency medical services and Telemedical Assistance Services;

8) environmental authorities shall be responsible for the arrangement of response to oil and chemical pollution caused by vessels in conjunction with maritime accidents together with other authorities in accordance with further provisions laid down in legislation pertaining to the prevention of oil pollution and provide the Border Guard with access to expertise within their field.

The air traffic service provider referred to in the Aviation Act (1194/2009) shall participate, free of charge, in the development of maritime search and rescue cooperation, maintenance of maritime search and rescue preparedness and search and rescue operations wherever it can provide appropriate expertise, personnel and equipment related to its field. The content of such cooperation shall be agreed upon in greater detail under an agreement between the Border Guard and the air traffic service provider.

Contributors other than the state authorities, enterprises and agencies referred to above shall, on request, provide the Border Guard and other maritime search and rescue authorities with access to their expertise, personnel and equipment free of charge where this is necessary for preparedness planning or in response to an emergency phase.

Section 5

Maritime SAR Committee and Management Boards

The National Maritime SAR Committee assists the Border Guard in planning, developing and monitoring maritime rescue operations.

The Coast Guard District shall be assisted by the Search and Rescue Sub-Region Management Board, which shall provide assistance to the Coast Guard District in the planning of maritime search and rescue services. Where so required by an emergency phase, the duties of the Management Board shall be to provide assistance to the Search and Rescue Coordinator and Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator in the harmonisation of the maritime search and rescue tasks of authorities, volunteer associations and other organisations and other contributors to maritime search and rescue. If so required by the scope or special seriousness of the emergency phase, the Search and Rescue Sub-Region Management Board may be extended to also include representatives of the national management of authorities, voluntary associations and other organisations, or experts.

Special provisions concerning an On-scene Co-ordination Board to be appointed as necessary to assist the OSC can be provided by Government Decree.

Section 6

Voluntary work

Maritime rescue operations can use the assistance of voluntary associations and other organizations with the exception of tasks involving significant use of public authority.

The Border Guard can delegate tasks falling within the sphere of maritime rescue operations and training and information tasks to a voluntary association or other organization operating within the sphere of maritime rescue.

Section 7

International co-operation in maritime rescue operations

The MRCC decides upon international agreement or request by a foreign state on rendering available assistance abroad in a matter falling within the sphere of maritime rescue operations when necessary for rescuing human life. The MRCC also decides on requesting foreign assistance when necessary for rescuing human life.

In receiving assistance referred to in subsection 1, the MRCC shall assist foreign SAR units in permit, notification and other similar matters relating to their entry into the country, as specified in legislation or as stated in any international agreement binding on Finland concerning conditions for entering the country.

Section 8

Preparedness requirements

Maritime search and rescue services shall be planned and provided in a manner ensuring the measures included in them can be performed without delay and efficiently. The Search and Rescue Coordinator shall be responsible for maritime search and rescue coordination and maintenance of maritime search and rescue preparedness in the Search and Rescue Sub-Region.

Within the limits set by the resources allocated for the Border Guard, the Border Guard shall, in addition to other Search and Rescue Units suitable for maritime search and rescue duties, maintain the preparedness of helicopters that, alongside their other duties, are suitable for the performance of maritime search and rescue duties. The maritime search and rescue helicopter on call shall always be equipped with basic-level emergency medical service preparedness for search and rescue duties.

When resources are allocated for search and rescue operations performed in response to an individual emergency phase, efforts shall be made to reserve resources for the performance of search and rescue operations in response to any other coinciding emergency phases wherever possible without compromising the objectives set for this Act.

Section 9

Prioritisation of rescue measures

The primary objective of rescue measures in response to a multimodal accident shall be to save human lives. Other rescue and prevention measures related to the same multimodal accident shall be coordinated with measures taken to save human lives in the manner determined by the Search and Rescue Coordinator or the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator.

Section 10

Duty to participate in maritime search and rescue

Everyone must without delay pass on any reports and other information they have received regarding an emergency phase to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre or Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre and notify the Centre in question of any observations and measures regarding the emergency phase.

A person who is aware of someone in danger at sea is obliged, if possible without causing unreasonable danger to him/herself or others, to begin on his/her own initiative the action that the situation requires and possible action for saving the person in danger.

At the orders of the SMC, every person fit for work residing in the accident or danger area or its vicinity is obliged, if necessary for the search and rescue of persons in danger at sea, to assist in a maritime rescue operations task, unless hindered by a just cause. For a special reason, a person residing in another area can be obliged to assist in a maritime rescue operations task. A person ordered to assist shall not, except for some just cause, leave his/her task until the SMC has granted permission to do so.

Section 11

Obligation to assign property to be used for a maritime rescue operations task

If necessary for the search and rescue of persons in danger at sea, the SMC can order the requisition of vessels, aircraft and other vehicles, food, buildings, communication and data connections, communication equipment, other equipment and materials as well as fuel and lubricants to be used for a maritime rescue operations task.

Section 11 a

Isolation of a search and rescue area

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator may temporarily prohibit access to the sea area on which a search and rescue mission takes place and restrict access if this is necessary to secure the efficient performance of search and rescue operations and to avoid further emergency phases.

In the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) area referred to in the Vessel Traffic Service Act, decisions regarding the isolation of the search and rescue area shall be made by the VTS authority following a proposal by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator.

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator may request the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority to prohibit, within the scope of its powers, access to the airspace in which the search and rescue mission takes place or restrict access if this is necessary to secure the efficient performance of search and rescue operations.

Section 12

Maritime rescue register

In order for maritime rescue operations to be implemented expediently and to clarify the events and related SAR operations concerning a dangerous situation subsequently, the Border Guard Headquarters (*registrar*) will, in the event of dangerous situations, keep a computer-aided national maritime rescue register of action plans drawn up, emergency notifications received and action carried out that is based on them.

Section 13

Information in the maritime rescue register

In order to maintain readiness for action, the readiness, identification and contact information of persons prepared to take care of maritime rescue tasks may be entered in the maritime rescue register.

The following information concerning the issuing and receipt of an emergency notification may be entered in the maritime rescue register:

1) name, personal identity code or date of birth, place and country of birth, sex, citizenship or nationality and other identification and contact information for identifying the person issuing the emergency notification;

2) time and method of issuing the emergency notification;

3) in relation to the emergency notification, identification information on the connection and location information of the mobile communications system, and information regarding the subscriber, user and installation address of the connection;

4) name and other identification and contact information of the recipient of the emergency notification.

The following information regarding a dangerous situation may be entered in the maritime rescue register:

1. name, personal identity code or date of birth, place and country of birth, sex, citizenship or nationality and other identification and contact information for identifying the person being reported in the emergency notification or being rescued from a dangerous situation;

2. information regarding the medical condition of a person referred to in paragraph 1, if the information is considered significant for expedient implementation of SAR measures;

3. information concerning the care measures administered to a person rescued from a dangerous situation;

4. other information concerning the emergency notification or measures implemented in a dangerous situation.

The emergency notification tape or equivalent technical recording may be kept in connection with register information.

Section 14

Right to obtain information from authorities

Notwithstanding secrecy regulations, the Border Guard has the right to receive necessary information for planning maritime rescue operations from another maritime rescue authority free of charge regarding the readiness for action and location of the authority referred to and the readiness, identification and contact information of personnel.

For the purpose of maritime search and rescue preparedness planning and correspondingly for the performance of search and rescue duties during emergency phases, the Border Guard shall, notwithstanding any secrecy regulations, have the right to obtain free of charge information that is necessary for it to perform its duties as follows:

1) details of vehicles, vehicle owners and holders contained in the Vehicle and Driver Data Registers of the road traffic data system maintained by the Transport Safety Agency and the Vehicle Register of the Government of Åland;

2) data regarding distress messages and emergency phases as well as preparedness and location data of authorities operating at sea contained in the Emergency Response Centre data system, including the Police assignment report register;

3) details of aircraft, aircraft owners and holders contained in the Finnish Aircraft Register maintained by the Transport Safety Agency and the Emergency Locator Transmitter Register maintained by the air traffic service provider;

4) data on vessels and vessel and cargo traffic from municipal port authorities;

5) information concerning a fishing vessel, owner and possessor of the vessel and activities of the vessel from the fishing authority;

6) information concerning a boat and the owner and possessor of a boat from the local register office and from the Government of Åland boat register;

7) data on vessels, their owners and holders from vessel registers maintained by the Transport Safety Agency and the Government of Åland and other registers maintained by the Transport Safety Agency;

8) data on vessel traffic from the Vessel Traffic Service System maintained by the Finnish Transport Agency and data related to maritime surveillance from the Defence Forces;

9) data on positions of radio equipment, and on radio equipment, its owners and holders contained in the register of radio licences from the Finnish Communications Regulatory Agency (FICORA);

10) information concerning vessel and cargo traffic from the Customs information system;

11) information referred to in sections 4 and 5 of the Population Information Act (507/1993) from the Population Register Centre population information system.

(3) Information in the border control register referred to in section 3 of the Border Guard Act (579/2005) can be used if necessary in order to organize SAR action in a dangerous situation.

Section 15

Right to obtain information from private enterprises and organisations

Notwithstanding any secrecy regulations, the Border Guard shall have the right to obtain free of charge details of vessels and their crews, passengers and cargo from shipping companies, pilotage and icebreaking service providers, boating organisations, travel, cargo, port, security and rescue service operators and shipbuilding companies that are necessary for the performance of maritime search and rescue duties.

Section 16

Right to receive information from telecom operators

In a dangerous situation, the Border Guard has the right to receive, notwithstanding secrecy regulations, identification information regarding a connection and location information on a mobile communications system regarding an emergency notification and information concerning the subscriber, user and installation address of the connection from a telecom operator referred to in the Act on the Protection of Privacy in Telecommunications (516/2004), as further enacted in section 35 of the Act on the Protection of Privacy in Telecommunications and sections 97 and 98 of the Communications Market Act (393/2003).

Section 17

Handing over of information

The Border Guard has the right to receive information referred to in sections 14-16 over a technical connection as agreed separately, or in some other way.

Section 18

Erasure of data from the Maritime Search and Rescue Register

Personal information shall be removed from the maritime rescue register when keeping it is no longer considered necessary for the purpose of registration referred to in section 12. Personal information other than that concerning the maintenance of readiness for action shall be removed from the register within ten years of the event.

The Border Guard shall determine whether data contained in the Maritime Search and Rescue Register is necessary no later than within two years from the date on which the data was filed in the register.

Section 19

Other maritime rescue register users

Other maritime rescue authorities may enter information in the maritime rescue register and use the information over a technical connection if necessary for the implementation of a maritime rescue task. Information concerning the readiness for action and performance of national military defence shall not, however, be handled by authorities other than the Defence Forces and Border Guard.

The authority who has entered the information in the maritime rescue register is responsible in the implementation of his/her tasks for the accuracy of the information and legality of registering and using it.

Section 20

Provisions and regulations for handling personal information in the maritime rescue register and for the publicity of the information

That which is enacted in the Personal Data File Act (523/1999) will be applied to the handling of personal information in the maritime rescue register, unless otherwise provided for in this Act. International treaties binding on Finland will also be complied with in handling personal information in the maritime rescue register.

That which is enacted regarding the publicity of official documents will be applied to the publication of maritime rescue information.

Section 21

Fees and compensations

The Government pays reasonable reimbursement and compensation for costs incurred by a person appointed for a maritime rescue operations task in accordance with section 10, subsection 3. The Government pays reasonable reimbursement and compensation for costs incurred by a voluntary association or other organization for participating in a task assigned to it by the Border Guard in accordance with section 6, subsection 2.

The state shall pay a person who has participated under section 10, subsection 2 or participated upon an order under section 10, subsection 3 in a maritime search and rescue task compensation for tools, clothing and equipment that have been damaged or lost in such a duty. The state shall pay compensation to a member of a volunteer association or other organisation for tools, clothing and equipment that have been damaged or lost in such a duty where the duty was assigned by the Border Guard to the volunteer association or other organisation under section 6, subsection 2.

The Government pays full compensation for the use of property requisitioned in accordance with section 11, and full compensation for property that has been damaged, lost or destroyed. The Government pays full compensation to a voluntary association or other organization for property that has been damaged, lost or destroyed in a maritime rescue task when the task has been assigned to it by the Border Guard in accordance with section 6, subsection 2.

Section 22

Requesting reimbursement or compensation

Reimbursement or compensation referred to above in section 21 shall be requested from the Border Guard within three months of the origin of the grounds for compensation. It is a condition for payment of compensation for property that has been damaged, lost or destroyed that the damage has been immediately reported to the SMC.

Section 23

Compensation for accident

A person ordered to assist in a maritime rescue operations task in accordance with section 10, subsection 3, or who, upon participating in a maritime rescue operations task in accordance with section 6, subsection 2 as a member of a voluntary association or other organization, does not have a right to compensation on the basis of section 1 of the Employment Accidents Act (608/1948), will be compensated for an accident occurring during the task from Government funds. The compensation will be paid on the same grounds as for an occupational accident or occupational disease. Compensation will be paid only insofar as the person does not have the right to compensation of at least the same amount on the basis of other legislation.

If the employer of the injured party has paid a salary, advance payment or other payment for the accident for which compensation is payable on the basis of this Act, that which is enacted in the Employment Accidents Insurance Act on the right of the employer will be in force.

A matter concerning the payment of compensation from Government funds on the basis of subsections 1 and 2 will in the first instance be handled by the State Treasury.

Section 24

Authorities responsible for maritime safety radiocommunications

In addition to the duties laid down in section 3, the Border Guard shall be responsible for radiocommunications during maritime search and rescue emergency phases and the maintenance of related preparedness. The Finnish Transport Agency shall be responsible for safety messages and information related to maritime safety and distress traffic in the Saimaa area.

Section 25

Subjection of the use of certain emergency signalling devices to authorisation

The use of emergency signals referred to in Annex IV of the 1972 Convention on the International Regulations for Prevention of Collision at Sea (Treaty Series 30/1977) and of signals that are misleadingly similar to such emergency signals is prohibited in situations other than an emergency.

Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection 1, a Coast Guard District may authorise the use of emergency signalling devices specified under a Government Decree for exercise purposes. Furthermore, the use of such emergency signalling devices for exercise purposes in a location other than a vessel or aircraft may be authorised in coastal municipalities by the Coast Guard District and elsewhere in Finland by the Police. Authorisation shall be subject to the condition that there is no risk of unnecessary search and rescue operations being launched and that the activity does not compromise safety. If necessary, the authority providing the authorisation may assign a leader for the exercise, whose orders and instructions must be obeyed by those participating in the exercise.

Punishment for a false alarm concerning distress at sea or other similar emergency will be as enacted in chapter 34, section 10 of the Penal Code (39/1889).

Section 26

Appointment of an OSC and ACO, and public liability

The OSC and ACO will be appointed by the SMS.

Persons who are to be appointed OSC and ACO shall be officials with a good knowledge of the task. In urgent cases, when necessary for rescuing human life, a person other than an official who is able to carry out the task can be appointed temporarily as OSC and ACO.

The OSC and ACO subject to public liability when carrying out their tasks.

Section 27

Further provisions and instructions

Further provisions may be given by government decree:

1) SAR operations in dangerous situations;

2) leading, terminating and suspending SAR operations;

3) specified tasks of other maritime rescue authorities referred to section 4 above;

4) appointment and composition of the National Maritime SAR Committee and the SRS Co-ordination Board;

5) on the participation of the maritime search and rescue helicopter on call in basic-level emergency medical services in cases referred to in section 8(2), training related to the provisions of basic-level emergency medical services, maintenance of professional skills and the procedure related to the demonstration of qualifications as well as other practical matters related to basic-level emergency medical services;

6) the qualification requirements of the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator and other personnel of Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centres;

7) procedures to be followed and documents to be used in requesting reimbursement and compensation referred to in section 21 above;

8) procedures to be followed in requesting permission referred to in section 25, subsection 2 above, notifications and information to be issued regarding the permission and qualification requirements for the commander to be appointed for the exercise;

9) notifications regarding SAR operations between authorities and sharing related information.

The Ministry of the Interior issues a maritime rescue manual, the aim of which is, supplementing the issued provisions, to lead to the most effective and expedient arrangements for maritime rescue operations possible and which contain information concerning maritime rescue operations tasks, structure, planning, leadership, communications system, tasks of the MRCC and MRSC as well as united efforts regarding maritime rescue operations.

Section 28

Implementation provision

This Act enters into force on 1 February 2002.

This Act repeals the Act on the Maritime Rescue Service (628/1982) issued on 20 August 1982 as later amended.

Government Proposal 71/2001, Administrative Committee Report 14/2001, Parliament Reply 99/2001

Entry into force and application of amendments:

23.5.2003/402:

This Act enters into force on 25 July 2003.

Government Proposal 112/2002, Communications Committee Report 26/2002, Parliament Reply 272/2002, Framework Directive 2002/21/EC; EC Official Journal No. L 108, Authorisation Directive 2002/20/EC; EC Official Journal No. L 108; Access Directive 2002/19/EC; EC Official Journal No. L 108; Universal Service Directive 2002/22/EC; EC Official Journal No. L 108

19.12.2003/1215:

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2004.

Government Proposal 105/2003; Administrative Committee Report 7/2003; Parliament Reply 86/2003

16.6.2004/521:

This Act enters into force on 1 September 2004.

Government Proposal 125/2003; Communications Committee Report 13/2004; Parliament Reply 69/2004

29.12.2009/1660:

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2010.

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Act may be taken before its entry into force.

Government Proposal 185/2009; Communications Committee Report 23/2009; Parliament Reply 247/2009

Government Decree on Maritime Search and Rescue

The following shall be enacted pursuant to the Government's decision, made on presentation of the Ministry of the Interior and on the basis of section 5 (3), section 25 (2) and section 27 (1) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act (1145/2001):

Section 1

Definitions

In this Decree:

1) *uncertainty phase* means a dangerous situation referred to in section 2(1)(a) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act (1145/2001) 2 §:n, when uncertainty prevails over the safety of people at sea or when action must otherwise be taken to determine potential need for assistance;

2) *alert phase* means the dangerous situation referred to in section 2(1)(b) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, when safety of people at sea can be assumed to have been endangered or when the inquiries to determine whether there is any need for assistance have been fruitless;

3) *distress phase* means the dangerous situation referred to in section 2(1)(c) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act, when it is apparent that a person is in danger at sea and in need of immediate assistance.

Section 2

Coordination of search and rescue operations

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator shall decide the level of emergency phase on the basis of information obtained by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator and be responsible for the alerting of the necessary Search and Rescue Units and their assignment with the tasks required in response to the emergency phase.

Section 3

Action in an uncertainty phase

In an uncertainty phase the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre must initiate inquiries to determine whether there is any need for assistance.

Section 4

Action in an alert phase

In an alert phase the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre shall, wherever possible, expand the inquiries and initiate search action to determine whether there is any need for assistance as well as prepare to initiate any necessary rescue action.

Section 5

Action in a distress phase

In a distress phase the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre must take all the necessary action in order to save human lives that is possible and appropriate with the resources available.

Section 6

Suspension and termination of search and rescue actions

The measures commenced due to the dangerous situation can be terminated when it has been determined by virtue of the inquiries and search actions performed that there is no need for any further action to be taken or when everyone in an emergency or danger has been found and saved, or when it has become apparent that there is no justified hope of finding any survivors.

The measures commenced due to a dangerous situation can be temporarily suspended, if the conditions prevailing in the action area prevent appropriate search and rescue actions due to darkness, weather conditions or another comparable reason.

Decisions regarding the suspension and termination of search and rescue actions shall be made by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator. In individual cases the Search and Rescue Coordinator or their deputy may exercise their right to decide upon a matter.

Section 7

Compatibility of search and rescue actions with other maritime and air traffic

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator is responsible for making the necessary notification to the regional service centre of the Vessel Traffic Service system, to the regional air navigation centres of the Finnish Civil Aviation Authority and to the police to enable them to take appropriate action to guide or restrict traffic in the accident area or in its vicinity.

Section 8

Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator's qualification requirements

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator must be:

1) an officer with an officer's degree or Bachelor's degree in Military Sciences who has obtained the deck officer's certificate referred to in section 21(1) of the Decree on the Manning of Ships, Certification of Seafarers and Watchkeeping (1256/1997); or

2) a warrant officer who has passed the supplementary course of the Coast Guard Programme of the Border Guard's educational institution or a corresponding course provided earlier.

Furthermore, the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator must have completed the General Operator's Certificate Training as well as the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator Training and On-Scene Coordinator Training organised by the Border and Coast Guard Academy as well as any other maritime search and rescue courses required from them by the Border Guard.

The Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator must have good oral and written competence in Finnish or Swedish and satisfactory oral competence in the other language. A further requirement is skills level three in the English language in the listening and reading comprehension as well as

speaking subtests of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency referred to in the Act on National Certificates of Language Proficiency (964/2004).

Furthermore, the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator must have the capabilities and skills required for the successful coordination of demanding maritime search and rescue operations.

Section 8 a

Qualification requirements of the person responsible for distress traffic in the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre

The person responsible for distress traffic in the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre must have completed the General Operator's Certificate Training and any other maritime search and rescue courses required from them by the Border Guard. Furthermore, they must have basic knowledge of the operations of the Border Guard and other maritime actors.

The person responsible for distress traffic in the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre must have good oral and written competence in Finnish or Swedish and satisfactory oral competence in the other language. A further requirement is skills level three in the English language in the listening and reading comprehension as well as speaking subtests of the National Certificate of Language Proficiency referred to in the Act on National Certificates of Language Proficiency.

Section 9

The Border Guard's participation in basic-level emergency medical services

The Border Guard's maritime search and rescue helicopter must be capable of participating in cases referred to in section 8(2) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act in basic-level emergency medical services by providing such care and transport wherein there are sufficient capacities to monitor and care for the patient in a manner whereby their condition will not unexpectedly deteriorate during transport and wherein it is possible to begin simple life-saving measures.

The Border Guard shall enter into an agreement with regional or local health care authorities of the locations wherein the maritime search and rescue helicopters are based regarding the sufficient maintenance of personnel's professional competence related to participation in the provision of basic-level emergency medical services and the demonstration of their qualifications as well as the guidance and advice required by them during transport.

Section 10

Appointment and members of the National SAR Coordination Committee

The Ministry of the Interior shall appoint a National SAR Coordination Committee for a term of three years at a time.

The Committee shall be chaired by a Border Guard officer with in-depth competence in maritime search and rescue services. Other members of the Committee shall comprise a sufficient number of representatives of other maritime search and rescue authorities and key volunteer organisations in the field. The Committee shall have the right to appoint a part-time secretary.

Section 11

Appointment and members of the Search and Rescue Sub-Region Management Board

The Commander of the relevant Coast Guard shall appoint the Search and Rescue Sub-Region Management Board.

Representatives of key maritime search and rescue authorities, volunteer organisations or other associations participating in maritime search and rescue actions in the area are invited as members of the Management Board.

Section 12

Management Board in the distress location

In case of several authorities and also volunteers participating in measures in the distress area, the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator will appoint an Management Board in the distress location consisting of experts in different fields to assist the Coordinator in the distress location.

Section 13

Notifications and exchange of information

The Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre shall ensure that those participating in maritime search and rescue duties are provided without delay with the information necessary for search and rescue operations and with a notification of the suspension and termination of search and rescue measures.

Search and Rescue Units must without delay notify the Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre in question about their receipt of an alert, their embarkment upon the task as well as the launch and termination of search and rescue action.

The Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre shall without delay notify Defence Command Finland about the termination of search and rescue action in which foreign government aircraft or vessels have participated within Finland's territorial waters.

Section 14

Procedure applied in claiming remuneration and compensation

The remuneration or compensation referred to in section 21 of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act has to be claimed with a form consistent with the outline confirmed by the Border Guard. The form shall be submitted to the relevant Coast Guard.

Section 15

Emergency signalling devices subject to authorisation

Emergency signalling devices referred to in section 25(2) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act the use of which in situations other than a distress phase is subject to separately issued authorisation comprise the following transmitter-based emergency signalling devices:

1) emergency position-indicating radio beacon (EPIRB);

2) emergency locator transmitter (ELT);

3) personal locator beacon (PLB).

Emergency signalling devices referred to in section 25(2) of the Maritime Search and Rescue Act the use of which in situations other than a distress phase in a location other than on board a vessel or aircraft is subject to separately issued authorisation comprise:

1) rocket parachute flare or hand flare or flare pistol or flare pen gun showing a red light;

2) a smoke signal giving off orange-coloured smoke.

Section 16

Procedure followed in applications for authorisation to use emergency signalling devices

Applications for authorisation to use emergency signalling devices referred to in section 15(1) above in a situation other than a distress phase shall be made using the form adopted by the Border Guard. The application must be submitted to the West Finland Coast Guard District no later than two weeks prior to the planned exercise. The West Finland Coast Guard District shall be responsible for the submission of the necessary international notifications in accordance with the Cospas-Sarsat programme.

Applications for authorisation to use emergency signalling devices referred to in section 15(2) above on board a vessel or aircraft in a situation other than a distress phase shall be made using the form adopted by the Ministry of the Interior. The application must be submitted to the West Finland Coast Guard District no later than two weeks prior to the planned exercise.

Section 17

Reports and other information about the use of emergency signalling devices subject to authorisation

When authorising the use of an emergency signalling device, the Coast Guard District and the Police must make sure the relevant Maritime Search and Rescue Command Centre, emergency response centre, Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) centre and, where necessary, the aviation rescue service unit and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre of a neighbouring country are informed about the authorisation granted well in advance of the use of the emergency signalling device .

The authorisation granted shall be notified to the public and seafarers as agreed or provided in more detail.

Section 18

Entry into force and transitional provision

This Decree shall enter into force on 1 February 2002. Section 8 (2) of the Decree shall enter into force 12 months after the entry into force of the Decree.

The Border Guard acting in the role of Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator who does not meet the qualification requirements laid down in section 8 (3) may continue in their role following the entry into force of this Decree.

Entry into force and application of transitional provisions:

29.12.2009/1661:

This Decree enters into force on 1 January 2010.

A person acting in the role of Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator who does not meet the qualification requirements laid down in section 8(3) may continue in their role following the entry into force of this Decree.

A person acting in the role of the person responsible for distress traffic who does not meet the qualification requirements laid down in section 8 a may continue in their role following the entry into force of this Decree.

URGENCY TRAFFIC PROCEDURES USING VHF, MF AND HF FREQUENCY BANDS AND INMARSAT EQUIPMENT

Example of distress traffic in accordance with the GMDSS on VHF, MF and HF frequencies:

1. Transmit a DSC distress alert on the DSC distress frequency.
2. Receive a DSC distress acknowledgment from the MTCC/MRSC on the DSC distress frequency.

After this radiocommunications switch to the voice distress frequency in the same frequency band:

3. Transmit the distress message.
4. Receive acknowledgments from the MRCC/MRSC and other vessels. These are transmitted by voice: ’RECEIVED MAYDAY’.
5. Receive the standard-form further information (arriving announcements) from other vessels.
6. Proceed to free-form distress traffic. All radiocommunications must, however, begin with the signal ’MAYDAY’.

The distress traffic procedures are specified in more detail below.

DSC distress alerts

The following information is transmitted automatically in a full distress alert:

- The Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) of the vessel in distress. This is a 9-digit unique vessel identifier programmed into the DSC device. The first three digits of the MMSI indicate the vessel's nationality. The Finnish Maritime Identification Digit (MID) is 230, whereby, for example, the MMSI of a vessel called Merikotka (OJFL) is 230192000.
- The nature of the distress can be selected from the following list:
    - Fire, explosion
    - Flooding
    - Collision
    - Grounding
    - Listing, in danger of capsizing
    - Sinking
    - Disabled and adrift
    - Undesignated distress
    - Abandoning ship
    - Piracy / armed robbery attack
    - Man overboard
    - EPIRB emission (only for coast station transmissions)
- Distress position coordinates and time of position data update. It is recommended that the vessel's electronic positioning device (GPS or equivalent) should always be connected to the DSC device to ensure automatic position data updates. Otherwise the position data and time of position data update must be entered manually.
- The default for subsequent communications is voice (telex can also be used on MF and HF).

Example of a VHF-DSC distress call on channel 70:

DISTRESS	format specifier 'Distress’
230192000	the MMSI of the vessel in distress
FIRE, EXPLOSION	the nature of distress
59°26’N 024°12’E	distress position coordinates
0722	time coordinates were updated
F3E/G3E SIMPLEX	subsequent communications by voice on channel 16

The quickest way to transmit a distress alert is to hold down the distress button(s) on the front panel of the device for approximately 5 seconds. This sends a distress alert with ’undesignated distress’ as the nature of distress by default. The distress alert is transmitted automatically to all stations within the communication range keeping a watch on the distress frequency in question. Before sending the alert, the operator can also select the nature of distress from the DSC device menu.

DSC distress acknowledgements

The DSC distress acknowledgment is transmitted by the MRCC/MRSC (or other coast station). The acknowledgement is sent on the same frequency on which the distress alert was received. The DSC acknowledgment is addressed to all ships to make sure all stations within communication range receive it.
The DSC distress acknowledgement contains the following information:

- the MMSI of the acknowledging station;
- specifies that the transmission is a distress acknowledgement;
- includes all the details of the original distress alert.

Example of a VHF-DSC distress acknowledgment on channel 70:

ALL SHIPS	address the acknowledgment to all ships
DISTRESS	category 'Distress’
002302000	the MMSI of the acknowledging station;
DISTRESS ACK	distress acknowledgement
230192000	the MMSI of the vessel in distress
FIRE, EXPLOSION	the nature of distress
59°37’N 024°20’E	distress position coordinates
0722	time coordinates were updated
F3E/G3E SIMPLEX	subsequent communications by voice on channel 16

The vessel in distress can also switch to radio telephony on the distress traffic frequency to transmit the distress call and distress message as soon as it has transmitted the DSC distress alert.

Vessels may only transmit a DSC distress acknowledgement on VHF or MF if the transmission of the distress alert continues and a MRCC/MRSC (or other coast station) has not acknowledged it within a minimum of five (5) minutes. A vessel that transmits a DSC distress acknowledgment must also notify a MRCC/MRSC on land of the distress alert. Vessels may never transmit DSC distress acknowledgements on the HF frequency band. If no coast station acknowledges a distress alert transmitted on HF, the vessel must transmit a distress relay alert on 8414.5 kHz and possibly also on other DSC frequencies it finds appropriate. Distress traffic initiated by a vessel on behalf of another vessel using DSC equipment should be addressed to an individual MRCC/MRSC.

Distress messages

After the DSC acknowledgment, distress traffic should switch to voice (or telex) on the distress traffic frequency on which the acknowledgment took place. The vessel in distress must now transmit a distress message by voice (or telex). The distress message allows a more detailed description of the situation and need for assistance than was possible in the DSC distress alert. The form and content of a distress message is as follows:

- MAYDAY;
- the name of the vessel in distress;
- the call sign or other identification of the vessel in distress;
- the MMSI if distress traffic was initiated using DSC;
- the distress position coordinates;
- the nature of distress (what has happened and what is the matter);
- the nature of assistance wanted (often simply 'I require immediate assistance');
- any other information which might facilitate the rescue.

Example of a distress message on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY
THIS IS 230192000 MERIKOTKA / OJFL
POSITION 59°37' NORTH 021°20' EAST
EXPLOSION IN ENGINE ROOM
I AM ON FIRE
I REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE
NUMBER OF PERSONS ONBOARD 14
OVER

Distress traffic in compliance with the GMDSS regulations can also be initiated without a DSC distress alert if the vessel cannot use DSC and it is known that there is a coast station keeping a watch within communication range. In such cases a distress call is transmitted using radio telephony. There can be a short break after the distress call before transmitting the distress message proper. The form and content of a distress call is as follows:

- MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
- (The words) THIS IS;
- the name and/or call sign of the vessel in distress spoken three times.

Example of a distress call on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
THIS IS
MERIKOTKA, MERIKOTKA, MERIKOTKA

After the call and the possible short break, a distress message is transmitted in accordance with the example given above. The MMSI is not used when not using DSC equipment.

Distress acknowledgment by voice (or telex)

All vessels receiving a distress message acknowledge it by voice (or telex). The acknowledgement is addressed to the vessel in distress. They should not, however, transmit their acknowledgement until they have waited a moment and allowed the MRCC/MRSC (or other coast station) to acknowledge the distress alert first by voice too so that it can check the functioning of the voice connection and make any possible further questions to initiate SAR and provide assistance.

- MAYDAY
- the name, call sign, MMSI or other identification of the vessel in distress;
- THIS IS
- the name and call sign or other identification of the acknowledging vessel;
- (the words) RECEIVED MAYDAY

Example of a voice acknowledgment on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY
MERIKOTKA, MERIKOTKA, MERIKOTKA / OJFL
THIS IS
KATARINA, KATARINA, KATARINA/OHLV
RECEIVED MAYDAY

Further details of the vessel acknowledging receipt and arriving announcement (estimated time of arrival, ETA)

The vessel acknowledging receipt must as soon as possible and without any separate request transmit the further details to the vessel in distress as follows:

- MAYDAY
- the name or other identification of the vessel;
- vessel position;
- vessel speed if on its way to the distress position;
- time of arrival (ETA) at the distress position.

Example of further details (arriving announcement) on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY
THIS IS KATARINA/OHLV
POSITION 59°33' NORTH 021°02' EAST
SPEED 12 KNOTS
ETA 0830 UTC
OVER

It should be noted that the transmission of further details must not take place in conjunction with the actual acknowledgment. Instead, this must take place as a separate transmission. The purpose of the acknowledgment includes finding out how many vessels near the distress vessel have received the distress message. Following this, further details are transmitted to find out the position of each vessel acknowledging receipt and the time it will take them to arrive for assistance.

Distress traffic after the initial procedure

Once distress traffic has been initiated, transmissions can be spoken more freely. Each communication in distress traffic must, however, begin with 'MAYDAY' to indicate that the communication is distress traffic. This guarantees issues such as the frequency or channel being reserved for distress traffic and that no interference is caused to distress traffic. This also lets any new stations arriving on the frequency or channel know immediately about the distress traffic and enables them to react appropriately.

Imposing silence on a station interfering with distress traffic

The MRCC/MRSC coordinating distress traffic, the unit coordinating SAR operations (OSC) or coast station attending to corresponding duties can impose silence on a station interfering with distress traffic by sending the instruction SEELONCE MAYDAY (pronounced as the French expression "silence, m'aider").

Message to announce cessation of distress traffic

The MRCC/MRSC coordinating the distress traffic announces that distress traffic has ceased using a fixed-form communication that ends with SEELONCE FEENEE.
The form of the message is as follows:

- MAYDAY
- the message is addressed to all stations
- THIS IS
- the name of the station sending the message spoken three times
- the call sign or other identification of the station sending the message;
- the time (UTC) the message originated and distress traffic ceased;
- the MMSI (if DSC was used), name and call sign of the vessel in distress;
- the word SEELONCE FEENEE (pronounced as the French expression "silence, fini").

Example of a message to announce the cessation of distress traffic on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY
ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS
THIS IS RESCUE CENTRE TURKU, RESCUE CENTRE TURKU, RESCUE CENTRE TURKU
0945 UTC
(230192000) MERIKOTKA OJFL
SEELONCE FEENEE

Transmission of distress alert on behalf of a vessel in distress and distress alert relay

A distress alert transmitted on behalf of another vessel and distress alert relay are identical in form. The Radio Regulations define the following three cases where a distress alert must be transmitted on behalf of another vessel:

- The vessel in distress cannot itself transmit a distress message.
    - E.g. the vessel does not have a radiotelephone or it is out of order.
- Further help is needed on the scene.
    - The decision about the need for further help is made by the person responsible for the operations of the MRCC/MRSC (Search and Rescue Mission Co-ordinator, SMC) or the master of or person responsible for a vessel other than the one in distress.

- The vessel has received a DSC distress alert on HF that has not been acknowledged.
    - A certain indication of the distress alert not having been acknowledged is that the alert is repeated at an interval of around 4 minutes.

In all the above cases traffic is initiated by the transmission of a DSC distress alert on behalf of the other vessel on the appropriate DSC distress frequency. The DSC message should take the following form:

- The message is addressed to a specific coast station.
- Category 'Distress'
- the MMSI of the sending station (automatically)
- The relayed distress message (distress relay)
- the MMSI of the vessel in distress (if known)
- the nature of distress
- Distress position coordinates and time of position data update.

Example of a VHF-DSC distress relay on channel 70:

ALL SHIPS	
DISTRESS	category 'Distress'
002301000	the MMSI of the sending station;
DISTRESS RELAY	
DISTRESS	format specifier 'Distress'
230192000	the MMSI of the vessel in distress
FIRE, EXPLOSION	the nature of distress
59°37'N 024°20'E	the distress position coordinates;
0722	time coordinates were updated in UTC
F3E/G3E SIMPLEX	subsequent communications by voice on channel 16

According to current regulations distress relay must be performed manually. In addition, on VHF and MF, the relay must be addressed to a MRCC/MRSC or other coast station.

If a vessel has transmitted a DSC distress relay, this is acknowledged using DSC like for the distress alert (only a MRCC/MRSC or other coast station). After the DSC acknowledgment, distress communications switch to voice (or telex) on the distress traffic frequency on which the acknowledgement was received. It is also recommended that a distress message on behalf of another vessel is transmitted on the voice communication distress frequency of the frequency band in question even if no DSC acknowledgement has been received.

Example of a distress message transmitted on behalf of another vessel by voice on VHF channel 16:

MAYDAY RELAY, MAYDAY RELAY, MAYDAY RELAY
THIS IS RESCUE CENTRE TURKU, RESCUE CENTRE TURKU, RESCUE CENTRE TURKU
FOLLOWING MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM FINNISH VESSEL MERIKOTKA OJFL ON VHF CHANNEL 16 AT 0728 UTC
BEGINS
MAYDAY
THIS IS 230192000 MERIKOTKA OJFL
POSITION 59°37' NORTH 021°20' EAST
EXPLOSION IN ENGINE ROOM

I AM ON FIRE
I REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE
NUMBER OF PERSONS ONBOARD 14
end of message
THIS IS RESCUE CENTRE TURKU
OVER

Otherwise the actual distress traffic takes place as usual.

INMARSAT DISTRESS TRAFFIC

General

When the distress priority is used, Inmarsat distress traffic is routed via the addressed land earth station (LES) to an associated MRCC/MRSC.

When the distress priority is used, Inmarsat distress traffic is usually routed automatically to the MRCC/MRSC to which the LES is routed. For example, the Eik LES in Norway routes distress traffic to MRCC Stavanger.
Distress priority guarantees immediate access to a channel, and traffic is directed to the MRCC/MRSC to which traffic is routed by the LES. (If a station insists on contacting a specific MRCC/MRSC to which traffic is not routed by any LES, the routine connection must be used. In such a case the caller needs to know the MRCC/MRSC telephone or telex number. If all channels are taken when using the routine connection, the caller needs to wait for the channel to become available.)

Inmarsat distress traffic is always traffic between the vessel and the MRCC/MRSC and cannot be followed by other stations.

The following Inmarsat services have the maritime distress and safety services required by the GMDSS:

- Inmarsat-B
- Inmarsat-C
- Inmarsat Fleet F77 (Inmarsat F)

Distress traffic procedures

The instructions provided in the equipment manufacturer's manual regarding the initiation and conduct of distress traffic using the vessel's Inmarsat equipment should be studied in advance.

Inmarsat-C

Inmarsat-C is a message transmission service that does not enable a bi-directional real-time connection between the parties. Distress messages are, however, transmitted without a delay.

Distress traffic on Inmarsat-C is launched as follows:

1. Transmission of a distress alert

A complete distress alert calls for the following information:

- the Inmarsat-C mobile number of your vessel;
  - This can be obtained automatically from the device's memory.
- The code of the Inmarsat land earth station (LES).
  - You should select the LES in your Inmarsat Ocean Region that is nearest to your position (but you can select any LES in the Ocean Region).
- vessel position coordinates;
  - Entered manually or automatically.
- time coordinates were updated
  - Entered manually or automatically.
- the nature of distress
  - Select one from the following list:
    - Unspecified
    - Fire/explosion
    - Flooding
    - Collision
    - Grounding
    - Listing
    - Sinking
    - Disabled and adrift
    - Abandoning ship
    - Assistance required
    - Piracy / armed attack
- vessel course
  - Entered manually or automatically.
- vessel speed (in knots)
  - Entered manually or automatically.

The distress alert can be transmitted even if not all of the above information is available.

In practice all the information, excluding the nature of distress, is usually obtained automatically. The default LES is the code of the LES used most recently. If necessary, this must be changed. If a code not used by any LES is accidentally entered, the distress alert is sent to the MRCC/MRSC routed to the network coordination station.

a) Sending a distress alert using the menu

Open the ’Distress’ window on the menu. Enter/check the correct information in the fields displayed. Send the distress alert.

b) Sending a distress alert using the distress button(s)

Keep the distress button(s) on the front panel of the device held down for 5−6 seconds. The message sent using this method contains the data automatically displayed in the fields of the ’Distress’ window and any information programmed earlier.

c) Sending a distress alert using the remote alarm panel

Keep the distress button(s) in the remote alarm panel held down for 5−6 seconds. The message sent using this method contains the data automatically displayed in the fields of the 'Distress' window or information programmed in them earlier.

Please note:
Once you have sent the distress alert, make sure the 'Scan' function of your Inmarsat-C station is only aimed at the satellite (Inmarsat Ocean Region) via which the distress alert was sent.
If the 'Scan' function is set at 'All Oceans', the equipment will check at specific intervals whether a better satellite is available. Contact with the MRCC/MRSC is lost for at least the period it takes to perform this check. The transceiver may also automatically lock onto another satellite, which may result in a permanent loss of contact with the MRCC/MRSC.

2. Wait for an acknowledgment transmitted by the LES and MRCC/MRSC

If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 5 minutes, send a new distress alert.

3. Send subsequent messages using the distress priority

Distress priority messages can be used to cover issues related to the distress phase and rescue actions in greater detail. Messages are formulated in the same way as Inmarsat-C routine messages but sent using the priority category "DISTRESS".

Make sure you send the messages via the same satellite and the same LES as the original distress alert so that they will be routed to the same MRCC/MRSC.

Inmarsat-B

Inmarsat-B is a digital service that enables distress traffic by telephone or telex.

Distress traffic by telephone:

1. Select the telephone function.
2. Select distress priority by pressing the [DISTRESS] button.
3. Enter the land earth station (LES) code.
4. Pick up the receiver, listen to the dialling tone and send the message as instructed in the transceiver manual.
5. Wait for the MRCC/MRSC to answer.
6. Read the following distress message:
   MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
   THIS IS [vessel's name and call sign] CALLING VIA INMARSAT-B
   FROM POSITION [latitude and longitude, or relative to a named point of land]
   MY INMARSAT MOBILE NUMBER IS [vessel's Inmarsat mobile number]
   USING THE [Inmarsat Ocean Region] SATELLITE
   MY COURSE AND SPEED ARE [course and speed]
   NATURE OF DISTRESS
   ASSISTANCE REQUIRED [specify]
   [any other information which might facilitate the rescue]
7. Communicate with the MRCC/MRSC and answer any questions asked.
8. Do not clear the call until instructed to by the MRCC/MRSC to do so.

9. Keep your Inmarsat-B station clear of traffic so that the MRCC/MRSC can call you back when necessary.

Distress traffic by telex:

1. Put the device into the telex / 'On-line' mode.
2. Press the [DISTRESS] button.
3. Enter the land earth station (LES) code and press [ENTER].
4. Wait for automatic connection to the MRCC/MRSC.
5. Press the [WRU] button to request the other station's Answer Back Code (ABC), make sure you are connected to the correct place and press [HERE IS] to send your own ABC.
6. Type the following distress message:
   MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
   DE (or THIS IS) [vessel's name and call sign] VIA INMARSAT-B
   FROM POSITION [latitude and longitude, or relative to a named point of land]
   MY INMARSAT MOBILE NUMBER IS [vessel's Inmarsat mobile number]
   USING THE [Inmarsat Ocean Region] SATELLITE
   COURSE, SPEED
   NATURE OF DISTRESS
   ASSISTANCE REQUIRED [specify]
   [any other information which might facilitate the rescue]
7. Communicate with the MRCC/MRSC and answer any questions asked.
8. Do not clear the call until instructed to by the MRCC/MRSC to do so.
9. Keep your Inmarsat-B station clear of traffic so that the MRCC/MRSC can contact you when necessary.

Inmarsat Fleet F77

Inmarsat Fleet F77 is a digital service that enables distress traffic by voice.

1. Select the telephone function and pick up the receiver.
2. Select distress priority by pressing the [DISTRESS] button.
3. Enter the land earth station (LES) code and press [#].
   - If you do not enter the code within approximately 15 seconds, the system establishes connection via the LES selected previously to the MRCC/MRSC to which traffic is routed by the LES.
4. Wait for the MRCC/MRSC to answer.
   - If you do not receive an acknowledgement within 15 minutes, send a new distress alert.
5. Read the following distress message:
   MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY
   THIS IS [vessel's name and call sign] CALLING VIA INMARSAT FLEET F77
   FROM POSITION [latitude and longitude, or relative to a named point of land]
   MY INMARSAT MOBILE NUMBER IS [vessel's Inmarsat mobile number]
   USING THE [Inmarsat Ocean Region] SATELLITE
   MY COURSE AND SPEED ARE [course and speed]
   NATURE OF DISTRESS
   ASSISTANCE REQUIRED [specify]
   [any other information which might facilitate the rescue]

6. Communicate with the MRCC/MRSC and answer any questions asked.
7. Do not clear the call until instructed to by the MRCC/MRSC to do so.
8. Keep your Inmarsat Fleet F77 station clear of traffic so that the MRCC/MRSC can call you back when necessary.

CANCELLATION OF AN INADVERTENT DISTRESS ALERT

Because a vessel may only transmit a distress alert on the authority of the master of the vessel, the master is also responsible for the cancellation of distress traffic. The procedure carried out to perform the cancellation depends on the procedure used to transmit the inadvertent distress alert.

Cancellation of an inadvertent DSC distress alert

The inadvertent distress alert was received by all stations within the communication range keeping a DSC watch on the frequency in question.

The cancellation must be made using DSC if allowed by the vessel's equipment. The cancellation message must, however, always also be sent by voice. (The cancellation message is sent by telex if the content of the distress alert telecommand field specified telex for subsequent communications).

1. Set the DSC device to standby mode so that it will not send any new inadvertent distress alerts.
2. Switch to the voice (or telex) distress frequency in the same band on which the inadvertent distress alert was transmitted.
3. Send the following cancellation message:
   ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS, ALL STATIONS
   THIS IS 230192000 230192000 230192000 MERIKOTKA OJFL
   POSITION 59°23’ NORTH 026°15’ EAST
   PLEASE CANCEL MY FALSE DSC DISTRESS ALERT OF 1246 UTC

If the inadvertent distress alert was sent on all DSC distress and safety frequencies, the cancellation must also be transmitted on all frequency bands.

Inmarsat-C

The inadvertent distress alert was only received by one MRCC/MRSC (the one to which the LES routed it). You might not necessarily know the name of this MRCC/MRSC.

1. Wait for an acknowledgement from the MRCC/MRSC.
2. Send the distress alert *using the distress priority*. Use the same *satellite and LES* as the ones used when sending the inadvertent distress alert.

Inmarsat-B

The Inmarsat-B service creates a real-time bi-directional connection between your vessel and a specific MRCC/MRSC (the one to which the LES routed it). You can cancel the distress alert immediately.

Inmarsat Fleet F77

The Inmarsat Fleet F77 service creates a real-time bi-directional connection between your vessel and a specific MRCC/MRSC (the one to which the LES routed it). You can cancel the distress alert immediately.

Cospas-Sarsat EPIRB 406 MHz

The inadvertent distress alert was received by one or more Cospas-Sarsat Local User Terminals (LUT) from which the information was relayed to the Mission Control Centre (MCC) and further on the basis of position data to the country's Cospas-Sarsat SAR Point of Contact (SPOC).

Contact any MRCC/MRSC (or other coast station) using any method and cancel the inadvertent distress alert.

Inadvertent distress alerts sent within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR) should primarily be cancelled by contacting MRCC Turku.

International agreements on maritime SAR

International agreements

The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (hereafter the Hamburg Convention) was adopted by an International Maritime Organization (IMO) conference in Hamburg on 27 April 1979. Finland ratified the Convention by a Government Decree on 6 December 1986.

The Hamburg Convention and its Annex lay down the intenational foundation and specify the performance requirements for the maritime SAR systems of the world's coastal states. The operational provisions on the arrangement of SAR services can be found in the technical Annex of the Hamburg Convention. There is a lot of variation between countries in terms of legislation and implementation and, for example, there are no two totally identical maritime SAR systems in the countries in the Baltic Sea area.

Under the Hamburg Convention the parties must enter into agreements with neighbouring states involving the establishment of SAR regions and the arrangement of cooperation in response to incidents at sea. The Convention also states that the parties should undertake to adopt all legislative and other appropriate measures necessary to give full effect to the convention and its Annex. Among other things, this means that the parties must ensure that necessary arrangements are made for the provision of adequate SAR services for persons in distress at sea round their coasts.

The Hamburg Convention also contains provisions regarding issues such as the coordination of SAR operations, classification of emergency phases on the basis of their seriousness, the measures required in response to emergency phases and SAR plans and systems.

The Hamburg Convention and its Annex have since been updated. The key amendments entered into force on 1 January 2000 and resulted in the publication of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (the IAMSAR Manual). This extended the Hamburg Convention's scope of application from SAR services to telemedical assistance services, medical first aid and transport of rescued persons to safety.

The Hamburg Convention requires that MRCCs/MRSCs provide assistance to other MRCCs/MRSCs on request. MRCCs/MRSCs must also have detailed action plans for SAR operations.

Bilateral agreements

Finland has also entered into bilateral agreements on general SAR operations and maritime SAR operations. The coverage of these agreements is not as wide as that of other conventions. The most important of these agreements are listed below.

Finland signed an agreement with Russia on maritime and aeronautical SAR between the countries on 5 March 1993. Under the agreement, the countries undertake to regard the Flight Information Region (FIR) border between Finland and Russia as the maritime and aeronautical SAR border between the countries. The countries have also made a commitment to the development of cooperation between their SAR services under the agreement. Such cooperation covers issues including joint SAR exercises, regular testing of communication connections between the countries, mutual visits by SAR experts and exchange of information and experiences about SAR services. The countries have also undertaken to guarantee sufficient maritime and aeronautical SAR arrangements in their respective maritime and aeronautical SAR areas.

Finland and Sweden signed an agreement on maritime and aeronatical SAR in Stockholm on 17 November 1993, under which the countries agreed to use the Flight Information Region (FIR) border between the countries as the border for maritime and aeronautical SAR between the countries. The content of the agreement corresponds to the corresponding agreement between Finland and Russia.

Finland and Estonia signed an agreement on maritime and aeronatical SAR in Tallinn on 9 September 1998. Under the agreement, the countries regard the border between the Tampere and Tallinn Flight Information Regions (FIR) as the maritime and aeronautical SAR border between Finland and Estonia. The agreement is similar to the agreement between Finland and Russia.

An important general SAR services agreement was signed in Stockholm on 20 January 1989. The agreement applies to cross-border cooperation between Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden and aims to prevent or restrict damage arising from accidents that may affect persons, property or the environment. This is a framework agreement that applies to multilateral and bilateral agreements between the Nordic countries.

Other international agreements on maritime SAR

In addition to the Hamburg Convention, Finland's legislation concering maritime SAR is also based on other international agreements that have been brought into force by an act or decree. These include the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the 1973 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) in their successive forms.

Main principles applied in the preparation of SAR cooperation plans

The Border Guard maintains material related to the preparation of and updates to the SAR cooperation plan on the internet at www.raja.fi/sar. The documents on the site include a description of Finnish maritime SAR services in PDF format.

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The ship and the shipowner prepare the ship's SAR cooperation plan in accordance with the provisions of SOLAS V/7.3 and IMO guidelines (MSC/Circ. 1079). The shipowner prints out the Finnish SAR services section of the SAR cooperation plan using the file available online and incorporates it into its SAR cooperation plan.

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Depending on the area in which the ship operates, the shipowner contacts either MRCC Turku or MRSC Helsinki to prepare a new SAR cooperation plan or update an existing one. If necessary, the shipowner makes an appointment with a Border Guard representative. Minor amendments to an existing SAR cooperation plan can be recorded by email or by phone. MRCC Turku and, for ships operating in the Gulf of Finland, MRSC Helsinki act as the coordinating points of contact.

↓

Depending on the area in which the ship operates, the shipowner submits the prepared plan in duplicate either to MRCC Turku or MRSC Helsinki, which are responsible for the distribution of the document to the MRCC/MRSCs within the Border Guard.

↓

MRCC Turku maintains a file that lists all SAR cooperation plans submitted to the Border Guard, their submission dates, update dates and cancellations. MRCC Turku sends the file to the MRSCs and the Finnish Transport Safety Agency whenever changes are made.

In conjunction with ship surveys, maritime inspectors check the ship's SAR cooperation plan is up-to-date on the basis of the list of SAR cooperation plans maintained by the MRCC.

Preparation of the SAR cooperation plan between the ship, the maritime SAR services and the shipowner

1 GENERAL

The SAR cooperation plan (hereafter also 'the plan') must be prepared in accorance with SOLAS regulation V/7.3:

> Passenger ships, to which chapter I applies, shall have on board a plan for cooperation with appropriate search and rescue services in event of an emergency. The plan shall be developed in cooperation between the ship, the company (shipowner) as defined in regulation IX/1, and the search and rescue services. The plan shall include provisions for periodic exercises to be undertaken to test its effectiveness. The plan shall be developed based on the guidelines developed by the Organization (IMO).

The guidelines presented in this document are based on the guidelines issued by the International Maritime Organization (MSC/Circ.1079, including appendices). The original documents are available on the internet at www.raja.fi/sar.

The purpose of a SAR cooperation plan is to increase the capacities of the ship, the shipowner and the SAR services to work together efficiently in the event of an emergency. This calls for smooth flow of information between the parties. Joint emergency response exercises must be conducted as appropriate. One of the objectives of SAR cooperation planning is to link the SAR response plans of the shipowner, the passenger ship and the relevant SAR services so that these plans complement each other. Another objective is to enable early and efficient establishment of contact in the event of emergency between the parties and ensure that all relevant details are known to the parties beforehand and that these details are kept up-to-date. It is important to keep contact details and information about the ship up-to-date, in particular her intended voyage and her communications and emergency response systems. Other objectives of the plan are to provide the ship and her operators with easily accessible information about maritime SAR and other emergency services available in the ship's area of operation and to assist in decision-making and contingency planning.

The SAR cooperation plan does not replace any existing emergency response plans the ship may have. The plan must be short and simple so that it is easy to use in the event of an emergency. The model provided in the IMO guidelines must be used in the preparation of the plan so that individual sections of the plan can be easily updated without having to rewrite the entire plan when changes are made. The preparation of the plan is affected by the type of service the passenger vessel is in. Owners of ships which trade on fixed routes must compile the SAR cooperation plan with the maritime SAR services in accordance with the guidelines below.

The following guidelines do not apply to ships transiting many different SAR regions, perhaps on a seasonal basis (such as cruise ships). The guidelines for these ships can be found in an appendix to the IMO document MSC/Circ.1079, see www.raja.fi/sar.

2 GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF A SAR COOPERATION PLAN

The following guidelines apply to ships which trade on fixed routes (such as ferries). In cooperation with the SAR services, shipowners must prepare a SAR cooperation plan as described in section 4 below and make sure it is updated as appropriate. The steps taken in the preparation of the plan are also described in Flow diagram 1. A general description of the principles applied in the preparation of a SAR cooperation plan can be found in Annex 5 to Maritime Search and Rescue Manual 2010.

The shipowner and the maritime SAR services each complete their own sections of the SAR cooperation plan. The sections are then brought together to form a file. The shipowner is responsible for providing the information needed for Module 1 'The shipowner' and Module 2 'The ship(s)'. The SAR services are responsible for providing Module 3 'The MRCC/MRSCs' and Module 4 'SAR facilities'. Module 5 'Media relations' and Module 6 'Periodic exercises' should be considered jointly by the shipowner and the maritime SAR services. Module 5 contains a summary of how the shipowner and maritime SAR services will response to media interest in any emergency. Module 6 'Periodic exercises' is covered in more detail in Section 3 below.

Copies of the completed SAR cooperation plan must be distributed to the ship, the shipowner and the relevant maritime SAR services. Vessel inspections must include a check to ensure all parties maintain an up-to-date copy.

The SAR cooperation plan must be written in English and, if agreed, a language or languages used by the ship, shipowner and the maritime SAR services. The parties are responsible for keeping the plan up-to-date and ensuring that any changes are included in the plan.

3 PERIODIC EXERCISES AND UPDATES TO THE SAR COOPERATION PLAN

The SAR cooperation plan must include provisions for periodic exercises. The nature of these exercises depends on the circumstances in which the ship operates and the availability of maritime SAR resources. SAR cooperation arrangements must be practiced once a year, for example in conjunction with exercises in accordance with the ISM Code. Each participant to an exercise must cover its own costs.

Various types of exercise are acceptable: 'full-scale' or 'live', 'coordination' and/or 'communications' exercises can all be appropriate. It is essential that exercises focus on cooperation between the ship, the shipowner and the maritime SAR services. If a ship has conducted a SAR cooperation exercise or participated in an actual SAR incident within the last 12 months, she should be deemed by all parties to have fulfilled the reguirements of the regulation.

Review, updating and auditing of the SAR cooperation plan must be conducted as part of the safety management system required by the ISM Code. The shipowner must update the plan once a year. Updates are inspected in conjunction with ship inspections.

4 MODULES OF THE SAR COOPERATION PLAN

The cooperation plan consists of independent modules that are brought together to form a file. Copies of the SAR cooperation plan must be held by the ship, the shipowner and the relevant maritime SAR services.

Module 1 The shipowner

1.1 name and address
1.2 contact list
- 1.2.1 24-hour emergency initial and alternative contact arrangements
- 1.2.2 further communications arrangements (including direct telephone/ fax links to and email addresses of relevant personnel)

1.3 chartlet(s) showing details of route(s) and service(s) together with delimitation of relevant Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs) or a simple description of the above
1.4 liaison arrangements between the shipowner and relevant MRCC/MRSCs
- 1.4.1 provision of relevant incident information
  - – how specific information will be exchanged at the time of an incident, including details of persons, cargo and bunkers on board, SAR facilities and specialist support available)
- 1.4.2 provision of liaison officers
  - – arrangements for sending shipping company liaison officer(s) to the MRCC/MRSC

Module 2 The ship(s)

2.1 the ship's name
- 2.1.1 basic details of ship
  - – MMSI
  - – call sign
  - – country of registry
  - – type of ship
  - – gross tonnage
  - – length overall (in metres)
  - – maximum permitted draught (in metres)
  - – service speed
  - – maximum number of persons allowed on board
  - – number of crew normally carried
  - – medical facilities
- 2.1.2 communications equipment carried
  - – communications equipment (frequencies and identifiers, including mobile phone number)
- 2.1.3 simple plan of decks and profile of the ship, transmittable by electronic means and including basic information on
  - – lifesaving equipment
  - – firefighting equipment
  - – plan of helicopter deck / winching area with approach sector
  - – helicopter types for which helicopter deck is designed
  - – means on board intended to be used to rescue people from the sea or from other vessels
  - – a colour picture of the ship

2.2 ship 2 (as for the ship in section 2.1, etc.)

Module 3 The MRCC/MRSCs

3.1 Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs) and Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRSs) along the route
- – chartlet showing SRSs in relevant area of ship's operation

3.2 Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC)
- – definition
- – summary of functions

3.3 On-Scene Coordinator (OSC)
- – definition
- – selection criteria
- – summary of functions

Module 4 SAR facilities

4.1 Search and Rescue Region (SRR)

4.1.1 The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and Maritime Rescue Sub-Regions (MRSCs)
- – addresses

4.1.2 communications
- – equipment
- – frequencies available
- – watch maintained
- – contact lists (MMSIs, callsigns, telephone, fax and telex numbers, email addresses)

4.1.3 general description and availability of designated SRUs and additional facilities along the route, eg:
- – fast rescue vessels
- – other vessels
- – heavy / light helicopters
- – long range aircraft
- – fire fighting facilities

4.1.4 communications plan

4.1.5 search planning

4.1.6 medical advice / assistance

4.1.7 firefighting, chemical hazards, etc.

4.1.8 shore reception arrangements

4.1.9 informing next-of-kin

4.1.10 suspension/termination of SAR action

Module 5 Media relations

This module contains a general communications plan employed by the maritime SAR services and the shipowner.

A description by the Border Guard about the principles applied in media communications in a SAR situation can be found on the internet at www.raja.fi/sar. The shipowner supplements the plan for its part in accordance with the general principles and incorporates the details under Module 5 of the SAR cooperation plan.

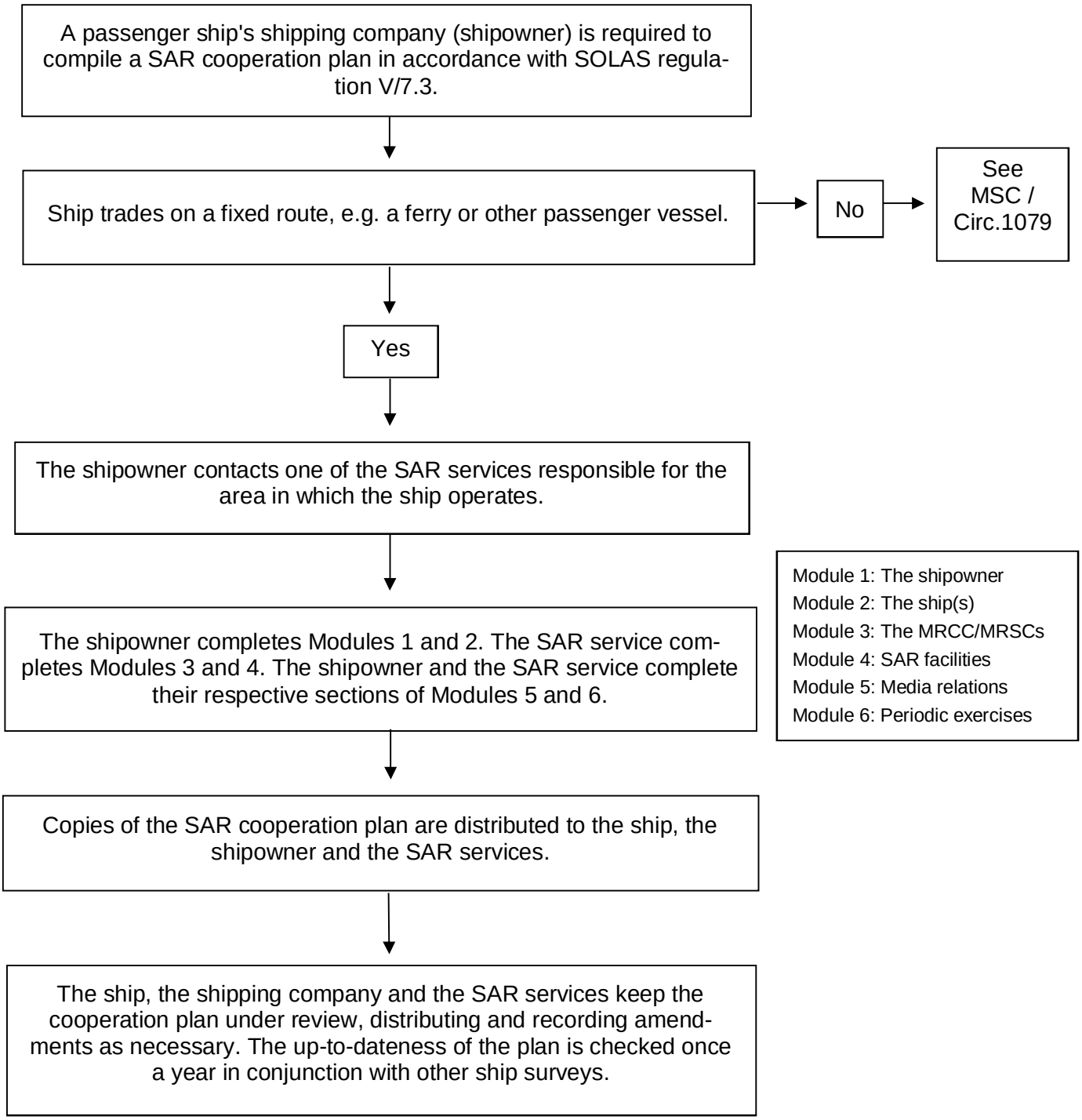
Module 6 Periodic exercises

This module contains the general principles agreed by the shipowner and the maritime SAR services regarding maritime SAR-related exercises, their type and frequency and the content of other cooperation (training, events, meetings).

A decription by the Border Guard about the principles applied in maritime SAR-related practice, training and other cooperation can be found on the internet at www.raja.fi/sar. In accordance with the principles, the shipowner prepares a preliminary plan for periodic exercises, including cooperation practice in accordance with the shipowner's needs. The Border Guard checks the feasibility of the periodic exercise plan for its part, and both parties incorporate their obligations under the plan into their own action plans on the basis of this. The joint plan for periodic exercises is incorporated into Module 6 of the SAR cooperation plan.

5 FLOW DIAGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF A SAR COOPERATION PLAN

Flow diagram 1:



MARITIME SAR TRAINING MODULES (THE BORDER GUARD)

1. BASICS OF MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE (MODULE B)

Duration: 2 study days

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person knows the basic principles of the Finnish maritime SAR system and the coordination of SAR operations.

- international agreements on maritime SAR and the maritime SAR systems of the neighbouring states
- the Finnish maritime SAR system
- maritime SAR services, Maritime Search and Rescue Act and Decree and guidelines and regulations governing maritime SAR operations
- the tasks and plans of the MRCC/MRSCs and their actions in different emergency phases
- major and multimodal accidents and related SAR coordination
- operations of an SRU
- conditions off Finland's coast and in the Baltic Sea
- history of maritime SAR
- accident types and statistics

2. PERSONAL SURVIVAL COMPETENCE (MODULE S)

Duration: 0.5 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person has the skills and knowledge required for personal survival in summer and winter conditions.

- the most commonly used survival equipment and its use
- how to act in emergency and abandon ship situations
- personal survival techniques
- hypothermia training and survival at sea
- how to survive falling through ice
- distress signals and distress signalling devices
- use of helicopters in rescue operations
- psychology (crisis behaviour)
- exercises and exercise safety
- survival swimming

3. RESCUE COMPETENCE (MODULE R)

Duration: 0.5 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of acting as a member of an SRU and has the personal skills and knowledge required in SAR operations.

Prerequisites: Module S must be completed. It is also recommended that Modules F and ROC are completed before Module R.

- the most commonly used rescue equipment and its use, including: pumps, firefighting equipment, line-throwing appliances, lifting appliances, towing equipment, heaving lines, lighting and night vision devices
- ice rescue techniques and equipment
- how to act in towage situations
- rescue from a grounded vessel and re-floating of boats
- how to respond to boat fires
- how to act in patient transport
- how to act in MOB situations
- how to keep lookout in a search situation
- health and safety at work and risk identification

4. FIRST AID TRAINING (MODULE F)
Duration: 1 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person knows how to administer first aid in maritime SAR situations as well as the basic principles of patient transport and emergency rescue.

- taking the provisions of STCW 95 into consideration
- the content of First Aid I and First Aid II courses of the Finnish Red Cross
- taking the special needs of the Border Guard maritime SAR operations into consideration

(Separate regulations apply to the training of SRU personnel performing basic-level patient transport.)

5. TRAINING OF HEADS OF SEARCH AND RESCUE UNITS (MODULE SRU)
Duration: 1 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of acting as the head of a search and rescue unit (SRU).

Prerequisites: Model R, F and ROC must be completed. Prerequisite set for cooperation authorities is seafaring experience and corresponding training in their special field.

- maritime SAR coordination
- drift calculations, basic principles and usage
- planning, implementation and coordination of SRU rescue operations
- search techniques and their use in different situations
- searches in archipelagos and open seas
- communications in maritime SAR operations
- rescue task performance, including: towage, searches, vessel fires, evacuation, MOB, patient transport
- cooperation with other units and the MRCC/MRSC
- basic principles of OSC operations
- health and safety at work and risk identification

6. ON-SCENE COORDINATOR TRANING 1 (MODULE OSC-1)
Duration: 2 study weeks

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person has the practical knowledge and skills required from an On-Scene Coordinator in maritime SAR situations. The module is intended for the personnel of the Border Guard, other maritime SAR authorities and cooperation organisations.

Prerequisites: Modules SRU (or corresponding practical work experience) and GOC must be completed. It is also recommended that Modules L and SP are completed before Module OSC-1.

- the Finnish maritime SAR system
- Maritime SAR legislation, guidelines and regulations
- nternational agreements on maritime SAR
- maritime SAR coordination
- the role of maritime SAR authorities in accidents at sea
- the special characteristics of major accidents, multimodal accidents and multiple-patient situations
- saving of property and environmental accidents
- salvage / SAR
- accident investigations
- OSC's tasks, rights and obligations
- maritime SAR communications
- OSC exercises
- release of information
- visits to an MRCC/MRSC
- visits to learn about the equipment and operations of different search and rescue units and

- about safety arrangements on board commercial vessels
- health and safety at work and risk assessment
- human factors (crisis behaviour and leadership)
- cooperation with aircraft
- medical tasks (patient triage, patient transport, most typical injuries)
- search planning and coordination
- teamwork, team dynamics

7. ON-SCENE COORDINATOR TRANING 2 (MODULE OSC-2)
Duration: 1 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person has the practical knowledge and skills required from an On-Scene Coordinator in maritime SAR situations. The module is intended for deck officers of commercial vessels and security personnel of shipping companies.

Prerequisites: Minimum requirement watchkeeping officer's certificate of competence and several years of practical seafaring experience.

Course participants cover most of the lecture material as independent study before the course. Module OSC-2 has a practice focus and can be used as week 2 for Module OSC-1.

- the Finnish maritime SAR system
- Maritime SAR legislation, guidelines and regulations
- nternational agreements on maritime SAR
- maritime SAR coordination
- the role of maritime SAR authorities in accidents at sea
- the special characteristics of major accidents, multimodal accidents and multiple-patient situations
- salvage / SAR
- saving of property and environmental accidents
- accident investigations
- OSC's tasks, rights and obligations
- maritime SAR communications
- OSC exercises
- release of information
- visits to an MRCC/MRSC
- visits to learn about the equipment and operations of different search and rescue units
- health and safety at work and risk identification
- human factors (crisis behaviour and leadership)
- cooperation with aircraft
- medical tasks (patient triage, patient transport, most typical injuries)
- search planning and coordination

8. OPERATOR TRAINING 1 (MODULES RCC-1 and RCC-2)
Duration: 3-4 study days + 3-4 study days

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person masters the basic principles of MRCC/MRSC work and is capable of acting as an operator. The RCC-1 and RCC-2 courses can also be used as revision courses for operators.

Prerequisites: Modules B, SP, GOC and CSOC must be completed.

8.1. MODULE RCC-1
- maritime SAR coordination
- recording of alerts and collection of information related to reception of distress alerts
- risk assessment
- interview and speech techniques
- mobilisation of SRUs
- creation and maintenance of resource situation awareness
- utilisation of registers
- reception of notifications and use of registers

8.2. MODULE RCC-2
- the maritime SAR application of the Border Guard Information System
- coordination of distress and safety traffic
- practical training in distress and safety traffic
- basics of maritime (SAR) English + practical training (SMCP)
- practice in the use of the maritime SAR application of the Border Guard Information System
- statistics and reporting

9. SEARCH AND RESCUE MISSION COORDINATOR TRAINING (MODULE SMC)
Duration: 2 study weeks

Successful completion of the course qualifies the person to act as a Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC).

Prerequisites: Modules SP, GOC and OSC-1 must be completed. It is also recommended that Modules ACO and CSOC are completed before the course. The completion of Module RCC is beneficial because the participants must be able to use the maritime SAR application of the Border Guard Information System. Exceptions to the above prerequisites can be made when training cooperation authorities.

- comprehensive knowledge of the Finnish maritime SAR system
- maritime SAR coordination
- knowledge and usage of resources and facilities
- receipt of alerts and notifications, situation assessments and the basic idea of the operations
- determination of the emergency phase
- operational planning and command
- operational coordination
- basic principles of Management Board work
- cooperation with aircraft
- environmental and multimodal accidents
- cooperation with other authorities
- attendance to international contacts
- release of public information
- statistics and reporting
- the legal status of the SMC
- medical tasks (situation assessment)
- special situations (such as diving accidents)
- simulator exercises, including with English as the working language
- maritime (SAR) English + communication (SMCP)
- teamwork and team dynamics

10. MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE ENGLISH (MODULE L)
Duration: 1 study week + independent study

Intensive course (covers the IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases, SMCP)

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of using the key terminology used in maritime SAR and conducting radio communications related to distress and safety phases in English.

Prerequisites: Because Module L is not a basic course in English, participants need to know the basics of English.

- key marine and maritime SAR vocabulary
  - vessel structure and types
  - vessel manoeuvring vocabulary
  - accidents at sea
  - maritime SAR services
  - helicopter rescue operations
  - rescue operations
- radio communications related to distress and safety phases (VIRVE public authority radio network)

11. SHORT RANGE CERTIFICATE TRAINING (MODULE SRC)
Duration: 2 study days

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of passing the examination for a Certificate in Marine Radio (Short Range).

12. RESTRICTED OPERATOR'S CERTIFICATE (MODULE ROC)
Duration: 5 study days

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of passing the examination for the Restricted Operator's Certificate.

12.1. CONTINUING TRAINING FOR RESTRICTED OPERATORS (MODULE ROCr)
Duration: 1 study day

Training to maintain radio qualification.

13. GENERAL OPERATOR'S CERTIFICATE TRAINING (MODULE GOC)
Duration: 10 study days

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person is capable of passing the examination for the General Operator's Certificate.

13.1. SUPPLEMENTARY TRAINING FOR GENERAL OPERATORS (MODULE GOCr)
Duration: 1 study day

Training to maintain radio qualification.

14. COAST STATION OPERATORS CERTIFICATE TRAINING (MODULE CSOC)
Duration: 4 study days

The objective is that, having completed the module, the on-call officer of the MRCC/MRSC is capable of using GMDSS in maritime SAR coordination.

Prerequisites: Module GOC must be completed.
- Coast station VHF/MF-DSC call traffic and VHF/MF voice traffic
- Cospas-Sarsat
- Inmarsat
- Navtex
- SART
- Portable VHF radiotelephones and aviation transceivers
- MRCC/MRSC communications systems
- Maritime radio regulations, guidelines and publications

15. SEARCH PLANNING AND COORDINATION (MODULE SP)
Duration: 1 study week

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person will be capable of planning and coordinating maritime search missions. They will know the theories related to search area planning and search missions and be capable of using the Search and Drift section of the Border Guard Information System.

Prerequisites: Module SRU must be completed or the participant must have sufficient practical experience in search missions.

- situation assessment
- forces affecting target movement (current, wind, etc.)
- determination of the search area using different methods
- search mission planning, command and coordination
- search coverage, search lanes and tracks and probability of detection
- the Search and Drift section of the maritime SAR application of the Border Guard Information System
- practical exercises (incl. possible practical exercises at sea)
- effort allocation

16. MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICE COOPERATION COURCE (MODULE CO)
Duration: 1−3 study days

The objective is to provide case-specifically targeted information about maritime SAR services and the Border Guard to cooperation authorities and organisations. The module can be adapted to meet the needs of each target group and can also be organised locally by Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRS).

- the maritime SAR systems of Finland and its neighbouring states
- international and national legislation and agreements
- the duties of the maritime SAR authorities
- intoduction to the operations of the MRCC/MRSCs
- the maritime SAR coordination system
- the special characteristics of major accidents, multimodal accidents and multiple-patient situations
- introduction to maritime SAR aircraft operations
- introduction to different SRUs
- introduction to survival equipment
- accident types and statistics
- accident analyses and presentations
- discussions and team work

17. AIRCRAFT COORDINATOR TRAINING (MODULE ACO)
Duration: 4−5 study days

The module is intended for persons who act as an Aircraft Coordinator (ACO), On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) or officers at the MRCC/MRSC or maritime SAR Management Board as well as aircraft pilots and co-pilots operating under the ACO.

The objective is that, having completed the training, the person knows the cooperation procedures and methods employed between the ACO, OSC and the MRCC/MRSC and is capable of acting as an ACO, as an ACO's partner or under an ACO in maritime SAR operations.

- current issues in maritime SAR
- maritime SAR coordination
- the operations of the OSC and the MRCC/MRSC
- the ACO's tasks, flight methods (VFR, IFR)
- aviation safety in maritime SAR operations

- maritime SAR aircraft operations
- exercises
- expert lectures
- SAR aircraft fleet in the Baltic Sea area

18. TRAINING TO MAINTAIN THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF SRU PERSONNEL (MODULE SAR-1)
Duration: 4 study days (can consist of several separate exercise situations conducted by administrative units).

The module provides a revision through practical exercises of the issues taught in Modules S, R and SRU.

- current issues and topics in maritime SAR
- the maritime SAR system, legislation and regulations
- use of survival equipment
- use of SAR equipment
- search planning and performance
- use of helicopters in SAR operations
- SRU operations in a variety of SAR situations
- SAR communications
- the OSC's operations and cooperation with the MRCC/MRSC
- health and safety at work
- Helicopter Underwater Escape Training (HUET)

19. TRAINING TO MAINTAIN SAR COORDINATION COMPETENCE (MODULE SAR-2)
Duration: 0.5 study weeks (can consist of several separate exercise situations conducted by administrative units).

The module consists of revision through simulation exercises of the issues taught in Modules OSC, RCC-1, RCC-2, SP, ACO and SMC.
- current issues and topics in maritime SAR
- SAR communications
- search planning and coordination
- situation assessments, operational planning and coordination
- Management Board work and multimodal accidents
- exercises
- use of maritime (SAR) English

20. REVISION TRAINING FOR ON-SCENE COORDINATORS (MODULE OSCr)
Duration: 1 study day

The module consists of revision through simulated radio/situation exercises at an SRU of the issues taught in Modules OSC1 and OSC2.

* distress and urgency traffic
* maritime (SAR) English
* situation awareness
* search planning
* command techniques
* maritime SAR coordination

21. MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINER COURSE (MODULE TC)
Duration: 2 study days

The module provides training/revision in issues related to maritime SAR training. The objective is to provide the participants with the knowledge and skills needed to act as maritime SAR trainer at the Border and Coast Guard Academy and administrative units. The course provides the capacities to plan, implement and organise maritime SAR training events at the field level. The course is also an annual revision course.

* basic principles of maritime SAR
* organising a training event
* teaching
* water rescue
* survival
* hypothermia
* distress signalling devices
* rescue equipment
* helicopter operations

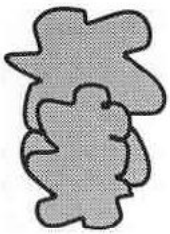
ABBREVIATIONS RELATED TO THE MARITIME SAR TRAINING SYSTEM

* **ACO** = Aircraft Co-ordinator
* **B** = Basics
* **CO** = Co-operation
* **CSOC** = Coast Station Operator's Certificate
* **F** = First Aid
* **GMDSS** = Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
* **GOC** = General Operator's Certificate
* **IAMSAR** = International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual
* **IMO** = International Maritime Organization
* **L** = Language (English)
* **MOB** = Man Over Board
* **MRCC** = Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
* **MRSC** = Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre
* **OSC** = On Scene Coordinator
* **R** = Rescue
* **RCC** = Rescue Coordination Centre
* **ROC** = Restricted Operator's Certificate
* **S** = Survival
* **SAR** = Search and Rescue
* **SC** = Search and Rescue Coordinator (in practice the Commander or Emergency Duty Officer of the Coast Guard District)
* **SMC** = Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator
* **SP** = Search Planning
* **SRC** = Short Range Certificate
* **SRU** = Search and Rescue Unit

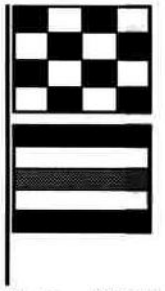
Red parachute signal rocket

Flames

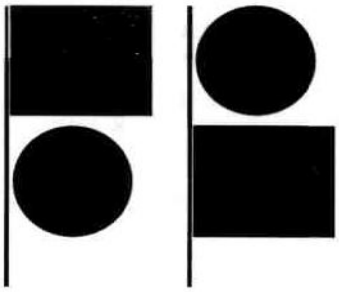
Red flare



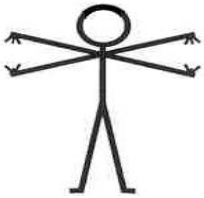
Orange smoke



The flags NC



Square and ball on top of each other



Slow and repeated raising and lowering of arms

SOS using light or sound

DISTRESS SIGNALS (Annex IV to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 'The Rules of the Road at Sea')

1. The following signals, used or exhibited either together or separately, indicate distress and need of assistance:
a) a gun or other explosive signal fired at intervals of about a minute;
b) a continuous sounding with any fog-signalling apparatus;
c) rockets or shells, throwing red stars fired one at a time at short intervals;
d) a signal made by radiotelegraphy or by any other signalling method consisting of the group ... - - - ... (SOS) in the Morse Code;
e) a signal sent by radiotelephony consisting of the spoken word "MAYDAY";
f) the International Code Signal of distress indicated by NC;
g) a signal consisting of a square flag having above or below it a ball or anything resembling a ball;
h) flames on the vessel (as from a burning tar barrel, oil barrel, etc);
i) a rocket parachute flare or hand flare showing a red light;
j) a smoke signal giving off orange-coloured smoke;
k) slowly and repeatedly raising and lowering arms outstretched to each side;
l) the radiotelegraph alarm signal;
l) the radiotelegraph alarm signal;
n) signals transmitted by emergency position-indicating radio beacons;
o) approved signals transmitted by radiocommunication systems.
p) alarms transmitted using Digital Selective Calling.

2. The use or exhibition of any of the foregoing signals except for the purpose of indicating distress and need of assistance and the use of other signals which may be confused with any of the above signals is prohibited. Authorisation for the use of distress signals subject to licence (signal rockets, hand flares and orange smoke) for exercise purposes may be issued by the Coast Guard District or the Police.

3. Attention is drawn to the relevant sections of the International Code of Signals and the relevant sections of the Merchant Ship Search and Rescue Manual (MERSAR) and the following signals:
a) a piece of orange-coloured canvas with either a black square and circle or other appropriate symbol (for identification from the air);
b) a dye marker.

The most common international abbreviations and their meanings in the SAR services context

ACO	Aircraft Coordinator
AIS	Automatic Identification System
ARCC	Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre
ARSC	Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Sub-Centre
ATA	actual time of arrival
ATD	actual time of departure
C	coverage factor
CES	coast earth station
COSPAS	space system for search of vessels in distress
CRS	coast radio station
C/S	call sign
CSP	commence search point
CSS	coordinator surface search
DF	direction finding
DMB	datum marker buoy
DME	distance measuring equipment
DSC	digital selective call
ELT	emergency locator transmitter
EPIRB	emercency position-indicating radio beacon
ETA	estimated time of arrival
ETD	estimated time of departure
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
GMT	Greenwich mean time
GPS	global positioning system
GT	gross tons

ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IAMSAR	International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual
IMO-SAR	International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue
IMO	International Maritime Organization
Inmarsat	International Mobile Satellite Organization
LES	land earth station
LUT	local user terminal
MAS	Maritime Assistance Service
MCC	mission control centre
MERSAR	Merchant Ship Search and Rescue Manual
MMSI	Maritime Mobile Service Identity
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
MRSC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Sub-Centre
MSI	maritime safety information
NAVTEX	navigational telex
OSC	On-Scene Coordinator
OSE	on-scene endurance
PLB	personal locator beacon
POD	probability of detection
R	search radius
RCC	Rescue Coordination Centre
RSC	Rescue Sub-Centre
RV	rescue vessel
S	track spacing
SAR	search and rescue
SARSAT	search and rescue satellite-aided tracking
SART	search and rescue transponder
SC	Search and Rescue Coordinator
SES	ship earth station

SITREP	situation report
SMC	Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator
SOLAS	Safety of Life at Sea Convention
SPOC	SAR point of contact
SRR	Search and Rescue Region
SRS	Search and Rescue Sub-Region
SRU	search and rescue unit
TMAS	Telemedical Assistance Service
UTC	universal time co-ordinated
VTS	Vessel Traffic Service

KEY DUTIES OF MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES AND OTHER ACTORS

The Border Guard

The Border Guard Headquarters

- The administrative management level that does not participate in the operational coordination of maritime SAR operations.
- Attends to planning, development and supervision as well as harmonisation of the activities of authorities and volunteers participating in maritime SAR at the national level.

The West Finland and Gulf of Finland Coast Guard Districts are responsible for

- maritime SAR delivery in the Search and Rescue Sub-Regions (SRSs) related to their operating areas;
- the preparedness of their SRS's MRCC/MRSC;
- the preparedness of their Coast Guard stations and patrol vessels to participate in SAR operations at sea (SRUs);

The duties of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centres (MRSCs) are, within their SRS or a or part thereof, to:

- ensure the maintenance of direct maritime SAR coordination and communication preparedness;
- receive distress alerts;
- assign assistance to those in danger at sea;
- coordinate SAR operations;
- monitor maritime safety radio communications to detect any emergency phases;
- be responsible for maritime SAR radiocommunications during emergency phases.
- relay Telemedical Assistance Service (TMAS) for vessels at sea

MRCC Turku also serves as the Finnish SPOC, SSAS and MAS centre. The MRCC/MRSCs are located at Coast Guard District Headquarters.

The Air Patrol Squadron is responsible for:

- the organisation of the Border Guard's aircraft operations;
- the preparedness of maritime SAR helicopters and patrol aircraft within the Finnish Search and Rescue Region (SRR).

Its maritime SAR helicopters and patrol aircraft are based in Helsinki, Turku and Rovaniemi.

The Border and Coast Guard Academy

- organises courses related to maritime SAR*)

(* A limited number of persons other than Border Guard personnel can also participate in the courses. Non-Border Guard employees can mainly participate in On-Scene Coordinator training and training of heads of search and rescue units.

Environmental authorities (oil and vessel chemical spill response duties)

The Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE):

- is the authority responsible for vessel oil and chemical spill responses and is tasked with the general organisation and development of these response actions;
- is responsible for tasks related to the prevention and restriction of water pollution in accordance with international agreements on oil and chemical spill response;
- performs statutory duties including:
    - deciding on the necessary vessel and cargo salvage and other tasks and taking measures to prevent and restrict water pollution;
    - deciding, where necessary, on response action and appointing the Response Commander (RC);
    - providing the necessary response material;
    - carrying responsibility for vessel emission monitoring within Finland's territorial waters.

Regional Environmental Authorities

- coordinate and monitor the delivery of vessel oil pollution and, where necessary, participate in response operations;
- are responsible for the preparation of the vessel oil and chemical pollution response cooperation plan for each sea area;
- are also responsible for the organisation of oil pollution inspections and the organisation of other research into the environmental impacts of oil and chemical pollution;

Rescue authorities

Municipal rescue departments

- operate under the master of the vessel while the vessel is underway or anchored;
- participate in maritime SAR in tasks that require special expertise in firefighting and rescue services;
- are usually responsible for the setting up of evacuation centres in accordance with the municipal preparedness plan and coordinate related support functions;
- coordinate the operations under the authority issued by the Rescue Act while the vessel is berthed.

The Emergency Response Service Administration

Emergency Response Centres

- operate in cooperation with the MRCC/MRSCs;
- if necessary, receive accident reports in the national emergency number 112 and relay the information to the MRCC/MRSCs;
- perform risk assessments related to calls;
- if necessary, alert resources in accordance with the risk assessment regarding the incident and the cooperation guidelines.

The Police

National Bureau of Investigation

- is responsible for investigations into serious crime or accidents and disaster victim identification (DVI).

Police departments (local police)

- participate in rescue operations and maintenance of public order;
- is responsible for reporting accidents to other necessary police departments and the Operational Command Centre of the Helsinki Police Department;
- coordination responsibility in vessel-related special incidents as specified in the internal guidelines of the Police;
- Helsinki Police Department:
    - has national responsibility for special security operations (the Counter Terrorist Unit and the Bomb Unit) in tasks related to public order and security;
    - acts as the national point of contact for the MRCC.
- The Police are responsible for maritime searches of missing persons following the termination of maritime SAR operations as unsuccessful (cf. section 3.4.4 of this Manual).

The Finnish Meteorological Institute

- provides the Border Guard with access to expertise in its sector;
- produces weather and navigational data and related forecasts needed by maritime SAR services;
- maintains the Border Guard's weather portal;
- produces the weather service for rescue operations.

Health care authorities and emergency medical services

- In addition to first aid administered by maritime SAR services, emergency medical services required in maritime duties are also provided by the hospital districts. Care and treatment preparedness can be divided as follows:
    - All maritime SRUs have the minimum capability of administering "lay person's" first aid.
    - As a rule, the Border Guard's maritime SAR helicopters are used in tasks that require basic level emergency medical services. If necessary, rescue and medical services units transported to the scene by maritime SRUs can be used for the provision of basic level emergency medical services.
    - The maritime SAR helicopter on call is always equipped with basic-level emergency medical service preparedness for SAR duties and capable of performing basic level patient transport.
    - On-call and emergency medical services provided by health care authorities are used for emergency medical service tasks that require care level response.
- Emergency medical services provided by health care authorities are responsible for the provision of telemedical assistance services (TMAS) for maritime SAR and the provision of on-call physicians' services for the assessment of the level of urgency in relation to maritime SAR services.
- Psychosocial support for rescued persons is provided by social welfare authorities.

Maritime authorities

The Finnish Transport Agency

- participates in the planning of maritime SAR operations;
- is responsible for the Vessel Traffic Service (operations of the VTS centres);

The VTS centre (incl. Turku Radio)

- reports accidents detected by or reported to it immediately to the MRCC/MRSC;
- if necessary, controls traffic in accordance with the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator's (SRM) request;
- on request, forwards information about accidents to other traffic;
- assists during emergency phases as instructed by the SMC;
- reports accidents to a maritime inspector.

The Finnish Transport Safety Agency

- is responsible for maritime inspections and performs inspections necessary in conjunction with accidents;
- determines the vessel's capability to move on;
- is responsible for the direction of the air rescue service.

The air traffic service provider (Finavia)

The Air Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC)

- is responsible for mobilising, on the MRCC/MRSC's request, the necessary aircraft (excl. the Border Guard's own aircraft);
- is responsible for the cooperation obligations of the air rescue service in relation to maritime SAR;
- where necessary, assists the Border Guard in the coordination of rescue actions performed by aircraft;
- is responsible for restricting air traffic other than aircraft participating in SAR missions in the airspace of the accident site where necessary.

The Accident Investigation Board

- The Accident Investigation Board operates in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice.
- Accident investigation is based on the Accident Investigation Act (373/1985) and the Accident Investigation Decree (79/1996). Investigations into accidents in waterborne traffic are also governed by regulations issued by the EU and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- The Maritime Accident Investigation Directive (2009/18/EC) applies to commercial vessels and fishing vessels with a length of more than 15 metres. The directive was issued on 28 May 2009 and must be implemented by 17 June 2011. An investigation must always be carried out after very serious marine casualties, which involve the total loss of the ship, a death or severe damage to the environment. The investigation must be carried out as a flag state, coastal state or interested state. A preliminary assessment of serious casualties is carried out to decide whether or not to undertake a safety investigation. The investigative body may also decide whether or not to undertake an investigation into other incidents.
- The IMO's new Safety Investigation Code (MSC.255(84) entered into force on 1 January 2010 as part of the SOLAS Convention (Chapter XI-1, Reg. 6). The incorporation of the code into the SOLAS Convention makes compliance with part

of the the Code mandatory. The mandatory part makes the investigation of very serious maritime casualties (same definition as in the EU directive) mandatory. The Code also contains "Recommended Practices".

- IWaterborne traffic accidents investigated include all accidents involving commercial shipping and commercial waterborne transport, accidents involving vessels in professional use within Finland's territorial waters and, when Finnish vessels are involved, also those outside Finland's territorial waters. Incidents involving a risk of accident can also be investigated. Boating accidents are only investigated if there is a particular reason in order to improve safety or prevent new accidents.
- The purpose of investigations into accident and incidents involving waterborne traffic is to prevent accidents. It is not the purpose of waterborne accident investigations or investigation reports to assign responsibility or determine liability for damages.

The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA)

- issues vessel radio licences and related identifiers (including call signs and MMSIs);
- maintains an up-to-date licence register of vessel radio stations and identifiers issued for them;
- is responsible for ensuring that maritime SAR authorities have access to up-to-date information about maritime radio equipment on board vessels and vessels' radio identification needed for the purpose of communication with and identification of vessels;
- on request assists maritime SAR authorities in accordance with its own special expertise, particularly in cases related to interference in distress and safety frequencies.

Shipowners

- Cooperation between the MRCC/MRSCs and ship owners is organised in accordance with the SOLAS Convention.
- Shipowners must submit their passenger vessels' safety plans and SAR plans to the MRCC/MRSCs in their areas of operation. The shipowner must also take care of plan updates.
- Shipowners and maritime SAR authorities agree upon joint exercises between vessels and maritime SAR authorities.

<u>The shipowner's alarm/safety team (or corresponding group):</u>

- assists vessels in the event of an accident;
- is responsible, if necessary, for contacts with parties including:
    - authorities;
    - the insurance company;
    - the rescue operator;
    - the classification society;
    - the owner;
    - crew relatives;
    - the media;
    - the freight carrier;
- ensures that the coordinating authority receives a list of persons on board;
- assists passengers in the event of changes to accommodation and travel arrangements.

The Finnish Lifeboat Institution

- is the umbrella organisation for volunteer maritime rescue associations in Finland, covering around 60 associations, with around half operating at sea and half in inland waters;
- provides and develops volunteer maritime SAR services in sea and inland water areas and provides related rescue training;
- participates in maritime SAR and environmental protection alongside authorities;
- provides rescue services in cooperation with relevant authorities and other rescue organisations as part of the national rescue system;
- maintains rescue stations and rescue preparedness and acquires rescue vessels and equipment.

Aland Island Lifeboat Society

- is a non-profit organisation with the main task of providing volunteer maritime rescue services within the Province of Åland;
- participates in maritime SAR and environmental protection alongside authorities;
- participates in oil spill responses;
- provides rescue services in cooperation with relevant authorities and other rescue organisations;
- maintains rescue stations and rescue preparedness and acquires rescue vessels and equipment;
- provides training related to maritime SAR.

The Finnish Red Cross

- acts as the liaison organisation for the Volunteer Rescue Service and coordinates volunteer rescue operations on land in particular;
- supports and assists the authorities in operations that require a lot of rescue personnel;
- maintains the preparedness of volunteer alert teams to support authorities in tasks including search operations on ice and islands and other rescue and first aid tasks, evacuations, psychological support services and prevention and reduction of adverse effects of environmental accidents;
- maintains a national preparedness team of psychologists for major accidents and special situations;
- supports the authorities in the Archipelago Sea with its service boat in tasks including those that call for the administering of first aid.

The Defence Forces

- survey the sea areas to detect and locate accidents and emergency phases in conjunction with surveillance of territorial integrity;
- participate, where necessary, in SAR operations with their personnel and equipment;
- support, on request, SAR operations with their special expertise.

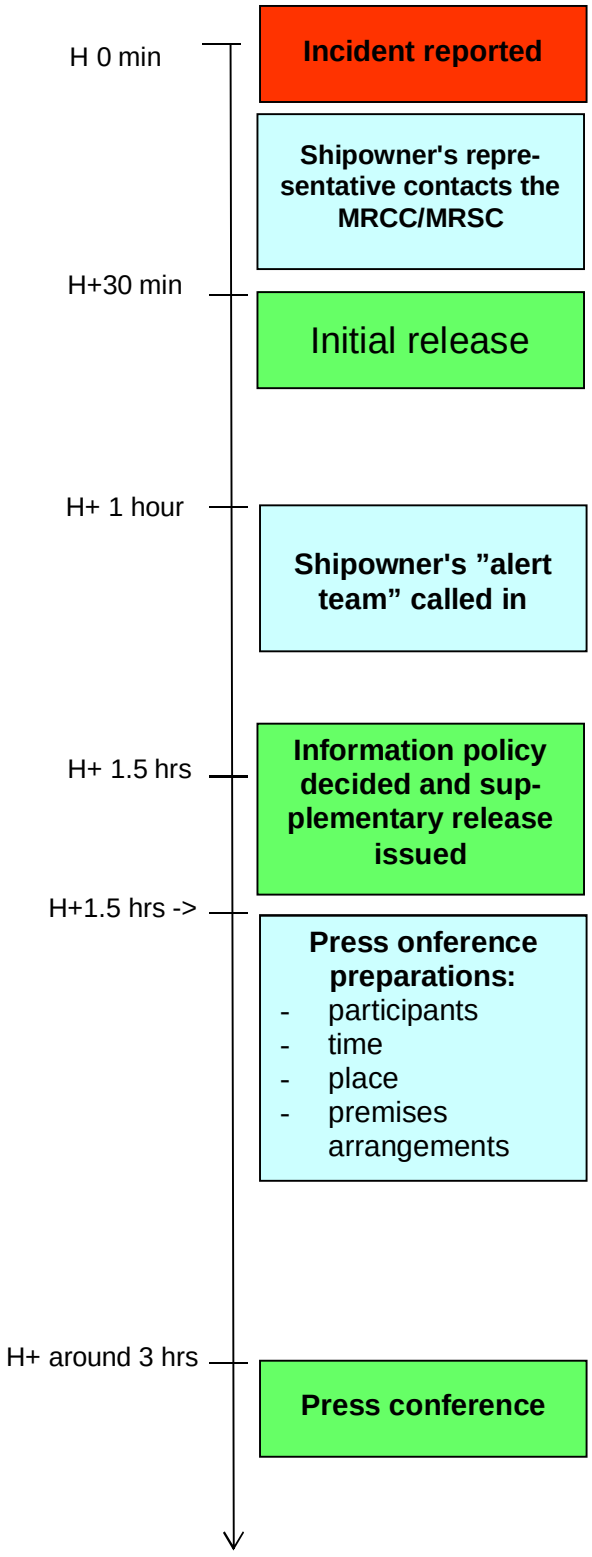
Finnish Customs

- participates, where necessary, in SAR operations with its personnel and equipment;
- provides, on request, access to data on vessel and cargo traffic from the data system of Finnish Customs.

Other maritime SAR authorities and actors

- operate in cooperation with the rescue authorities;

The principles employed in joint media relations by the shipowner and the authorities in conjunction with special situations



As the coordinating authority, the Coast Guard District coordinating the maritime SAR operation is also responsible for the coordination of information provision. Depending on the scope of the accident, the Coast Guard District may receive support from the Border Guard Headquarters and the communications staff of the Ministry of the Interior in accordance with the communications preparedness plans.

In ordinary maritime SAR operations the information provision is carried out by the Search and Rescue Mission Coordinator (SMC) of the MRCC/MRSC. Information about maritime SAR incidents is provided by email and fax and on the Border Guard website at www.raja.fi. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, the authority is coordinating the operations will also inform the management and communications unit of its own organisation about the incident, which will forward the information further to the Government level.

Efforts are made to provide the initial release within around 30 minutes of the incident. The initial release contains the following information:

– what has happened;
– where it has happened;
– when it has happened;
– what measures have been taken.

A press conference can be held in the event of serious accidents. The coordinating authority decides on the parties invited to and the content of the event. Once contact with all parties has been established, the media is informed of the time and place of the press conference. The aim is to hold the press conference as soon as possible after the occurrence of the incident taking, although the time of day should be taken into consideration. Supplementary releases about the incident and progress made in rescue operations can be provided before the press conference.

The press conference is attended by representatives of the authorities and the shipowner. The authorities should report on their own measures, while the shipowner covers issues related to the vessel and its crew. Only confirmed information about the incident should be provided at the event, but causes should not be assessed. Confidential details such as the identity of victims and any issues related to criminal investigations must be taken into consideration in information provision. The time and place of the following press conference is given at the event. Press conferences are held at regular intervals. Efforts must be made in crisis communications to provide information in a centralised manner to ensure equal media treatment. Therefore no individual comments to the media should be given by the parties between press conferences. Efforts must be made to respond to inquiries made by relatives as effectively as possible.

The authority responsible for the rescue operations decides on any transport of media representatives to the accident area. If journalists are allowed on board the accident vessel, this must be agreed upon in advance with the master of the vessel.

When selecting persons and places any international media relations required by the incident should be taken into consideration.