

**AGREEMENT  
FOR THE PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE IN  
AVIATION SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES  
BETWEEN  
THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND  
AND  
THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

The Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao P.D.R), hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties" or separately as the "Party";

Being members of the International Civil Aviation Organization, hereinafter referred to as "ICAO";

Adhering to the Standards and Recommended Practices contained in the Search and Rescue, Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation;

Recognising the importance of mutual assistance in aviation search and rescue services and the necessity of facilitation for search of aircraft in distress and rescue of survivors of an aircraft accident in the most expeditious and effective manner;

Have agreed as follows:

## ARTICLE 1

### **Definitions**

For the purpose of this Agreement, the following terms shall have the following meanings;

**Rescue coordination centre (RCC)** means a unit responsible for promoting efficient organization of search and rescue services and for coordinating the conduct of search and rescue operations within a search and rescue region.

**Search and rescue mission coordinator (SMC)** means the official temporarily assigned to coordinate response to an actual or apparent distress situation.

**Search and rescue (SAR) service** means the performance of distress monitoring, communication, coordination and search and rescue functions, initial medical assistance or medical evacuation, through the use of public and private resources, including cooperating aircraft, vessels and other craft and installations.

**Search and rescue region (SRR)** means an area of defined dimensions, associated with a rescue coordination centre, within which search and rescue services are provided.

**Notices to Airmen (NOTAM)** means a notice distributed by means of telecommunication containing information concerning the establishment, condition or change in any aeronautical facility, service, procedure or hazard, the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel concerned with flight operations.

## ARTICLE 2

### **General Provisions**

1. The Parties shall assist each other in the provision of SAR services in their SRRs as provided for in Article 2 of this Agreement.
2. Each Party shall, when circumstances permit, make available upon request necessary equipment (including SAR aircraft) in the SRR of the other Party and the other Party shall grant the necessary authorizations in order to facilitate immediate SAR operation in its SRR.

3. The RCCs of the Parties shall comply with the provisions of this Agreement and any relevant Standards and Recommended Practices of ICAO.
4. The Party providing assistance shall observe international law, national law, regulations of the Government of the other Party whose RCC is requesting assistance, and shall be subject to the supervision of the RCC of the requesting Party when bringing aircraft, equipment and persons into the SRR of the requesting Party.
5. Each Party shall be responsible for SAR services within its prohibited areas, which are published in its Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP).

### **ARTICLE 3** **Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs)**

For the purpose of this Agreement, [and as prescribed by ICAO and pursuant to Air Navigation Plan - Asia and Pacific Regions (ICAO Doc.9673)], the SRRs of the Parties shall be specified as follows:

1. The SRR of the Lao People's Democratic Republic shall include the Vientiane Flight Information Region; and
2. The SRR of the Kingdom of Thailand shall include the Bangkok Flight Information Region.

The Parties understood that the establishment of the SRRs in this Agreement, is only for the purpose of specifying SAR services provision responsibility and effective coordination in SAR services under this Agreement.

### **ARTICLE 4** **Coordination procedures for the Search and Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs)**

1. Relationship between RCCs  
RCCs shall:
  - a) promptly exchange SAR information concerning a distress situation or a potential distress situation;

- b) coordinate and assist each other in conducting SAR operations in their respective SRRs;
- c) take appropriate measures to ensure smooth and timely entry of SAR units into each other's SRR including the use of SAR facilities;
- d) exchange and supplement information on each other's SAR resources and capabilities where appropriate;
- e) co-ordinate SAR exercises, assist each other in training, exchange of documents, organise regular meetings to exchange SAR experiences;
- f) conduct monthly inspection of SAR communications networks between RCCs to ensure readiness and effectiveness of SAR services.

## 2. Responsibility for initiation of SAR action

- a) when the position of the aircraft in distress is known, action shall be initiated by the RCC in whose SRR the aircraft is located.
- b) when the position of the aircraft in distress is not known, SAR action shall be initiated by:
  - i) the RCC first becoming aware that the aircraft is in need of assistance; or
  - ii) the RCC in whose SRR the aircraft in distress was operating when the last radio contact was made; or
  - iii) the RCC in whose SRR the aircraft was proceeding to and the last radio contact was made on the common SRR boundary.

## 3. Coordination between RCCs

The authorities of a RCC who wish their search and rescue units to enter the other SRR for search and rescue purposes shall transmit a request, giving full details, as provided in paragraph 5 of this Article, of the projected mission and the need for it, to the other RCC or to any other authority that has been duly designated.

Upon receipt of such request, the authorities of the other RCC, or any other authority that has been duly designated shall:

- a) immediately acknowledge the receipt of such a request, and
- b) as soon as possible, indicate the conditions, if any, under which the projected mission may be undertaken.
- c) coordinate with the concerned authorities responsible for granting any necessary permission for the entry of such aircraft, persons or equipment into its SRR, except prohibited areas.

#### 4. Request for assistance

RCC of each Party may request from the other RCC or any other authority that has been duly designated for assistance, as maybe needed.

- a) The requesting RCC shall:
  - i) Communicate to the requested RCC the scope of assistance.
  - ii) The information shall be short and concise, and shall be communicated to the requested RCC before SAR units of the requested RCC enter into the area of responsibility of the requesting RCC. The requesting RCC shall assign specific tasks to the SAR units of the requested RCC and inform the latter of detailed information on the accident, if possible.
  - iii) Work out necessary plans to enable the operation of the SAR units of the requested RCC, including the landing of the requested RCC's SAR aircraft at an airport, when necessary, and the use of SAR equipment in the area of responsibility of the requesting RCC when performing the assigned SAR task.
  - iv) Be responsible for the control of the SAR operation of the requested RCC in its SRR. All search units shall operate under the control of the requesting RCC. The head of each SAR unit shall be responsible for the technical aspects, safety and persons of its units.
- b) Upon receipt of such request, the SMC of the requested RCC shall send an acknowledgement to the requesting RCC and coordinate necessary action to enable persons, aircraft or equipment of the other RCC to enter into requested area for SAR operation, except prohibited areas, and render any necessary assistance.

- c) The duration, termination, or suspension of SAR mission shall be mutually agreed and communicated by the Parties.
- d) When the SAR units of the requested RCC have entered the SRR of the requesting RCC or when the SAR aircraft of the requested RCC has landed at an airport or in the area of responsibility of the requesting RCC, these SAR units shall coordinate with the relevant authorities which have been designated by the requesting RCC.

## 5. Entry procedures for the SAR units into adjacent SRRs

When a RCC is about to deploy SAR operation in the other Party's SRR, the SMC of the RCC initiating SAR action shall immediately deploy SAR units for the mission and shall simultaneously send an Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunication Network (AFTN) message (or by other appropriate means of telecommunications with the following priority: ATS, HF, Telex, Fax, etc.) to the other RCC requesting entry clearance for its aircraft and personnel into the other RCC's area of responsibility. The message shall include the following information:

- a) notification of SAR operation;
- b) details of the distressed aircraft such as:
  - i) identification, type and callsign;
  - ii) time of last radio contact and last known position;
  - iii) departure point and time, routes and destination and estimated time of arrival;
  - iv) total number of persons on board;
  - v) radio frequencies in use;
  - vi) nature of emergency and other details, if any;
- c) area of specified SAR operation;
- d) number, identification, types and callsigns of SAR aircraft deployed;
- e) Lists of persons engaged in SAR operation and their nationality and passports if available.

6. Promulgation of search area(s) by NOTAM

When the area of probability has been determined, the RCC initiating SAR action shall co-ordinate with RCCs concerned and arrange for the issuance of a joint NOTAM to promulgate the search area(s).

7. Liaison during SAR mission

During the course of a SAR mission, the concerned RCCs shall maintain close liaison in order to ensure successful execution of the SAR mission.

The RCC responsible for the SAR mission shall periodically keep the other RCC informed of the units engaged in the SAR mission, area(s) to be searched, actions to be taken until such time that decision is made to suspend or terminate the SAR mission.

**ARTICLE 5**  
**Coordinating Authorities**

1. The responsible authorities of the Parties, for the control and supervision of the implementation of this Agreement, shall be as follows:

1.1 In the case of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

Air Navigation Division/Department of Civil Aviation

Location: Wattay International Airport

P.O.Box 119, Vientiane, the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Tel: (856-21) 513163/4

Fax: (856-21) 520237

AFTN: VLDCALAO

1.2 In the case of the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand:

Office of the Search and Rescue Commission

Location: 71 Soi Ngarmduplee, Rama IV Road, Thung Mahamek,  
Sathorn, Bangkok 10120 Thailand

Tel: (66) 2285 5450, (66) 2285 5451

Fax: (66) 2286 2925

AFTN: VTBAYCYX

2. The concerned authorities of the Parties, for providing SAR services and coordinating SAR actions 24 hours a day, shall be as follows:

2.1 In the case of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic:

Vientiane Rescue Co-ordination Centre of the Vientiane FIR

Location: Air Traffic Services Center, Vientiane/Wattay International  
Airport

Tel: (856-21) 512237; 512091

Fax: (856-21) 513041

AFTN: VLVTZQZX - VLVTZRZX

2.2 In the case of the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand:

Bangkok Rescue Coordination Centre

Location: 71 Soi Ngarmduplee, Rama IV Road, Thung Mahamek,  
Sathorn, Bangkok 10120 Thailand

Tel: (66) 2285 5450, (66) 2285 5451

Fax: (66) 2286 2925

AFTN: VTBAYCYX

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **Implementation and Expense**

1. Each Party shall implement the provisions under this Agreement subject to its capability in providing SAR services.
2. Each Party shall be responsible for the expenses incurred by its own SAR units during a SAR mission including cost of insurance thereof.
3. Aircraft engaged in a SAR mission shall be exempted from landing and ground handling, and air traffic services charges.

## **ARTICLE 7**

### **Recovery and Repair of Search and Rescue (SAR) Equipment**

When the SAR equipment of the requested RCC becomes impaired during a SAR mission in the area of responsible of the requesting RCC, the repair of such equipment shall be agreed upon between RCCs concerned. The list of the equipment, which needs repairing, shall be notified to the requested RCC. The requested RCC shall be responsible for the expenses incurred thereof.

## **ARTICLE 8**

### **Relation with International Agreements**

This Agreement shall not affect in any way the rights and obligations of the Parties under any concerned international agreement to which the Parties are parties.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### **Standard of Procedures**

The responsible authorities of the Parties shall agree on the details of implementation or Standard of Procedures (SOP) which shall form an integral part of this agreement.

## **ARTICLE 10**

### **Amendment**

Any amendment or supplement can be made at anytime by mutual written agreement between the Parties.

## **ARTICLE 11**

### **Dispute Settlement**

Any dispute arising out of the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be settled amicably by negotiations or consultations between the Parties.

**ARTICLE 12**  
**Entry into Force and Termination**

1. This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of its signature.
2. This Agreement shall be valid for an indefinite period unless it is terminated by either Party giving ninety (90) days prior written notice to that effect to the other Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Undersigned, duly authorized by their respective Government have signed this Agreement.

Done at Bangkok on the **13<sup>th</sup>** day of July 2019, in duplicate, in the English language.

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND**

*Arkhom Termpittayapaisith*

(H.E. Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith)  
Minister of Transport

**FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF  
THE LAO PEOPLE'S  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

*Bounchanh Sinthavong*

(H.E. Dr. Bounchanh Sinthavong)  
Minister of Public Works and Transport