

UNITED STATES
NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE COMMITTEE
INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

PURPOSE

1. This Agreement provides for a Federal-level Committee to coordinate search and rescue (SAR) matters of interagency interest for the United States.
2. The *United States National Search and Rescue Committee Interagency Agreement (2007)* is superseded by this Agreement, and the adoption of this Agreement coincides with the adoption of a new *National Search and Rescue Plan (NSP) of the United States*.

SPONSORSHIP

3. The Commandant of the Coast Guard is the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC) sponsor. The Commandant will:
 - a. Designate an executive-level person to Chair the Committee, who will report to the Secretary of Homeland Security via the Commandant; and
 - b. Appoint a Committee Secretary to ensure that the Committee operates according to policies and procedures contained in current directives.

MEMBERSHIP, OBSERVERS, AND ADVISORS

4. The member departments and agencies of the Committee include the:
 - a. Department of Homeland Security;
 - b. Department of Defense;
 - c. Department of State;
 - d. Department of Transportation;
 - e. Department of Commerce;
 - f. Department of the Interior;
 - g. National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and the
 - h. Federal Communications Commission.
5. Each member department or agency will designate one representative by name or position to serve as its primary committee member, and another to serve as its alternate committee member.

6. Each committee member may call upon officials from his or her department or agency to serve as advisors and to participate in meetings of the Committee, or of subsidiary groups of the Committee.
7. Other departments, agencies, and organizations may be invited with the approval of the Chair or the Committee to participate as government or non-government observers on an ad hoc basis.

PARTICIPATION

8. NSARC member departments and agencies are, by virtue of their membership, also Participants to the NSP.

OBJECTIVES

9. The objectives of the Committee are to:
 - a. Recommend implementation strategies and actions that ensure that the United States meets domestic needs and international commitments to provide effective SAR services;
 - b. Adopt, review, and update as needed the provisions of the NSP;
 - c. Serve as the primary coordinating forum within the Federal Government for the conduct and support of SAR operations covered by the NSP and for matters relating to national SAR policies and positions;
 - d. Administer the *National Search and Rescue Supplement to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual* and other interagency guidance on implementing the NSP;
 - e. Seek to ensure compatibility between the NSP and the National Response Framework (NRF), to ensure consistent practices and procedures;
 - f. Promote the application of research and development, improved standards and procedures, new technologies, regulations, and education to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of distress alerting and other SAR services and to reduce the associated risks;
 - g. Promote the coordination of SAR efforts of the NSARC member departments and agencies with other Federal, State, Tribal, Territorial/Insular Area, local, and international SAR authorities, as well as private and volunteer organizations;
 - h. Promote the effective use of all available resources to support the conduct of SAR operations;
 - i. Foster the appropriate use of SAR agreements and other arrangements and plans to improve cooperation and mutual support among the various national and international SAR authorities;

- j. Promote close cooperation among civilian and military authorities and organizations for the provision of effective SAR services;
- k. Promote analysis and initiatives to help citizens avoid or cope with distress situations;
and
- l. Consider, as appropriate, contingency plans for the use of SAR resources in emergencies other than SAR.

PROCEDURES

10. The following procedures will be followed in conducting the business of the Committee:

- a. The Committee will schedule regular meetings throughout the year.
- b. The Chair or any member department or agency via its respective committee member may call a special meeting when deemed necessary.
- c. Meetings will be properly documented by the Committee Secretary. Decisions will normally be made by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be submitted to the Committee for majority vote at a regular or executive meeting of the Committee, or by an informal poll of the Committee members by the Committee Secretary with the results properly documented.
- d. The Chair is authorized to represent directly the views, actions, recommendations, and decisions of the Committee, or otherwise to act on behalf of the Committee, by correspondence or other means, except that where such correspondence is directed to the Secretary of Homeland Security, it will be via the Commandant of the Coast Guard.
- e. The normal procedure for addition of a Federal department or agency as an NSARC member department or agency and NSP Participant will be as follows:
 - (1) Based on a unanimous vote of the Committee, the Chair will extend a written invitation to the prospective member department or agency, and the department or agency will respond to the Chair in writing of the department's or agency's acceptance; and
 - (2) The Chair will then notify each member department and agency, via the member department's or agency's executive secretary or an individual designated to receive such notification, of the acceptance. If no member department or agency objects within 60 days, the invited department or agency will from that time become an NSARC member department or agency and an NSP Participant. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
- f. Alternatively, an additional Federal department or agency may become a member department or agency and NSP Participant by written agreement of all current member departments and agencies and the prospective member department or agency.

- g. Termination of a department's or agency's committee membership will automatically terminate its status as an NSP Participant; such termination will be accomplished by the department's or agency's written notification to the other member departments and agencies at least 6 months in advance.
- h. Policy issues or plans that require the attention or approval of the signatories, e.g., adoption of the NSP, will be submitted by the Chair with recommendations for action. In such cases, the views of all of the Committee members will be included.
- i. Nothing in this Agreement will be viewed to obligate the member departments and agencies to comply with decisions of the Committee.

ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENT, RENEWAL, AND TERMINATION

- 11. This Agreement will enter into force on the date of the first Committee meeting following the completion of the signatures by the Secretaries (or equivalent level authority) of all of the member departments and agencies.
- 12. Based on a unanimous vote of the Committee, any proposed amendment to this Agreement or to the NSP must be adopted by one of the following means:
 - a. The Chair will notify each member department or agency, via the member department's or agency's executive secretary or an individual designated to receive such notification, of the proposed amendment. If no member department or agency objects within 60 days, the amendment will be considered adopted. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
 - b. The amendment will be adopted by written agreement of all member departments and agencies.
- 13. This Agreement, as amended, will remain in force until superseded by a new agreement or terminated.
- 14. This Agreement may be terminated with the written consent of the member departments and agencies at the time of termination or by any superseding arrangement.