

SAR 9



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SOLOMON ISLANDS COUNTRY REPORT

Presented by

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SOLOMON ISLANDS MARITIME AUTHORITY



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SAR GOVERNANCE

NATIONAL SAR COMMITTEE

- ❖ No National SAR Committee established
- ❖ Collaboration and coordination between SIMA and Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF)

ORGANISATIONAL ROLE

- ❖ Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA) is responsible for to coordinate maritime search and rescue operations (SIMA Act 2018 s.7(1)(d))
- ❖ SIMA is responsible for the costs of SIMA staff and SIMA equipment only while the Ministry of Infrastructure Development cover the costs of SAR operations
- ❖ SIMA hosts the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre Honiara (MRCCHON) and provide SAR services within Solomon Islands Search and Rescue Region (SRR)
- ❖ RSIPF is the main provider of SAR assets across Solomon Islands and close collaboration is implemented.

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SAR GOVERNANCE

SAR Legislation in place	National SAR Committee established	National SAR Plan in place	Signatory to SAR Tech Arrangement for Cooperation
Yes Shipping Act 1998 SIMA Act 2018	No Being considered in review of SARPLAN (integration to an existing committee)	Partially But draft SARPLAN needs to be reviewed and adapted (2023 workplan)	Yes Signed on 11/05/2017

Ratification of various safety conventions of UN, IMO, and ICAO

International Civil Aviation 1944	Maritime Search and Rescue 1979	Safety of Life at Sea 1974	Convention on the High Seas 1958
Yes	No	Partially SOLAS 74 ratified Protocols not acceded	Yes

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SAR COORDINATION

Search and Rescue Region.

- Solomon Islands has a sea area of 1, 589, 477 sq km which SIMA is responsible for.

Rescue Coordination Centre

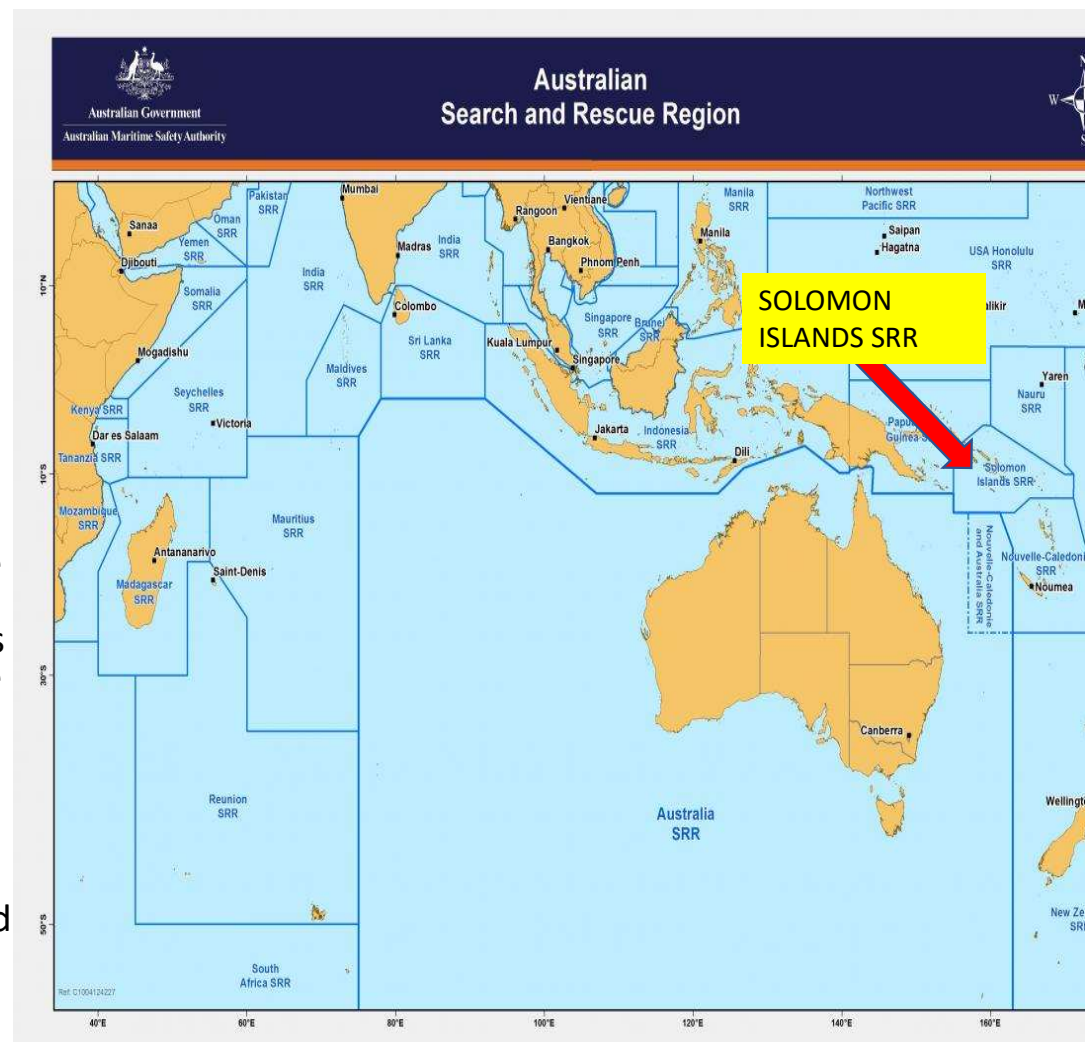
- MRCCHON is operated under SIMA
- 7 officers on 24/7 duty.

Key capabilities

- SIMA does not have any SAR assets and rely on RSIPF and community engagement.
- RSIPF has 2 patrol boats and numerous small boats at police stations.
- MoU with Australia provides assets in case of major SAR ops
- Experience has proved New Zealand ability to assist in some cases.

Key issue

- Communication is a key challenges due to absence of VHF network and poor conditions of ships radiocommunication systems
- Lack of localisation and alert devices on small boats engaged in all sorts of voyages including ocean voyage



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SAR COORDINATION

Maritime or Joint Coordinating Authorities established	Coordinating Authorities have appropriate systems, processes, and procedures	Coordinating Authorities have appropriate communication systems and response planning tools
Partially MRCC No coordination with aviation so far	Partially SIMA has SAR operation procedure SARPLAN to be reviewed	Partially MRCC has radiocommunication but VHF network is extremely poor AIS from Australia
List of deployable assets is developed and maintained	Coordinating Authorities have effective system for monitoring and documenting responses	Lessons management process is in place to support continuous improvement
No	Yes Incident reports as per procedure Data collection of SAR ops (type, assets, timing, etc.)	Partially Crises meetings after every incident which minutes are recorded.

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SAR RESPONSE

Resources available

- RSIPF patrol boats and small boats
- Community boats
- Helicopter services
- Assets under MoU with Australia

Response times

- Response time depends on location as Solomon Islands has numerous isolated areas beyond assets capability
- SAR procedure track timing of immediate response time (collection of information, communication to SMC, alert of RSIPF in less than 10 minutes)

Other applicable information

- Process agreed to inform AUS and NZ HC in case of major SAR ops
- Assistance from FFA for vessel tracking and identification of vessels in the vicinity is effective

Key challenges

- Radiocommunication
- Extremely wide area with 2 isolated provinces of scattered islands and Lord Howe atoll area
- Lack of available assets
- Lack of funding to remunerate private search parties

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SAR RESPONSE

SAR Standard Operating Procedures that align with the National SAR Plan are developed and in use	Training Needs Analysis is undertaken; Training Plans are developed and in use	Exercises that focus on preparedness for key risks are undertaken	Effective communication systems are established to support SAR coordination and response
Partially Procedure in place but SARPLAN needs to be review to adapt to our circumstances	Partially In house training and SIMA has training plans in place Needs attachment with AMSA	Partially Exercises within SIMA conducted Needs to conduct exercise with one passenger vessel (MRO) given recent incidents	Partially Communication channel in place But communication systems must be upgraded

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SAR PREVENTION

Initiatives

- On going SAR Small Craft Safety Workshop program for boat owners (Small Craft) and skippers through the Solomon islands Provinces (3 in 2021, 2 in 2022 funded by IMO, 3 in 2022 funded by SIMA)
- Vessel inspections strengthened to verify working of domestic vessels radiocommunication equipment before departure and at periodic inspection (in inspection guidelines)
- SIMA-funded MRCC radiocommunication equipment upgrade and assessment of domestic vessels radiocommunication equipment ongoing
- Small Craft Regulation ready and ongoing awareness activities including cooperation with provincial governments.

Opportunities

- SAR review.
- Including SAR under the SIMA Advisory Committee (made of 50-50 public-private membership)
- Agreement with domestic ship operators to secure engagement in case of major incident (experience with PELICAN 96 fire with 300+ passengers)
- More communication of MRCC contact details for early alert of missing persons or persons in distress at sea.

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SAR PREVENTION

Maritime safety education programmes are implemented	Maritime safety regulations (and compliance regimes) are in place	Mariners have access to appropriate safety equipment	Increased use of technology-based safety equipment (e.g. distress beacons, mobile/emerging technologies)
Partially SAR workshop in communities	Partially <ul style="list-style-type: none">Shipping Act 1998 as amended (as of 01/01/2021)Shipping (Nonconventional Vessel Safety) RegulationsOnly draft Small Craft Regulation	Partially Safety equipment on board domestic vessels subject to 2006 Regs. and inspections No safety equipment on board small crafts (<10m boats are not registered)	Partially Most of the vessels are yet to upgrade their communication systems (HF DSC & VHF DSC)

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WHAT IS THE ONE THING....

We do really well:

- We **respond to any alert on a 24/7 basis**
- In 2022 we strictly implemented our SAR ops procedure and significantly **reduced our immediate action timeframe**
 - 20% of immediate action time within 10 mins
 - Immediate Action average time of 37 mins
 - Total Incidents = 45 (Small Crafts = 35, International Vessels = 2, Domestic Vessels = 8)



We could do more effectively?

- **Build a stronger SAR system:**
 - NATPLAN reviewed with partner organisations (RSIPF, NDMO)
 - Agreement with domestic vessels
- **Upgrade Communication system (need partner assistance)**
 - Upgrade of radiocommunication equipment at the MRCC
 - Assist upgrade of radio communication equipment on board domestic vessels and introduce obligation of AIS
 - Develop VHF network across Solomon Islands
 - Declare A2 Sea Area



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QUESTIONS