

# The Pacific Search and Rescue Steering Committee

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2017–2021



*Saving lives together  
in the Pacific*







Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority



# Foreword

**The pacific region faces a unique set of challenges when it comes to search and rescue. With small countries and populations spread over vast geographic distances, effective response in an already challenging field becomes even more difficult.**

By working together, we can increase our successes and save more lives in the pacific. This strategic plan presents a roadmap to help all member countries, and in particular the nations that comprise the Pacific Search and Rescue Steering Committee, to focus their efforts and make a bigger difference together.

By working to build capability at four levels, across governance, coordination, response and prevention, we can ensure that all Pacific Island Countries and Territories have a firm foundation for engaging in SAR response, as well as the necessary capability and capacity to do so.

At the core of all of this work is relationship. As we build understanding and trust across the SAR agencies in the region, we will be better able to learn from each other, challenge each other to do better, and support each other in achieving this.

***“He ora te whakapiri, he mate te whakatakariri”***

***There is strength in unity, and defeat in division***

## **Mike Hill**

Manager RCCNZ and Safety Services, Maritime New Zealand  
Chair PACSAR SC



# Who We Are

The Pacific Search and Rescue (PACSAR) Steering Committee is a collective of search and rescue agencies from five principal nations – Australia, Fiji, France, New Zealand, and the United States of America – that hold responsibility for significant search and rescue regions (SRRs) of the central and south eastern pacific. Each of these nations is committed to working with other Pacific Island Countries or Territories (PICTs) within or neighbouring their areas of responsibility to build SAR response capability. Collectively, the committee is working to build SAR capability and cooperation across the pacific to save lives.

The PACSAR Steering Committee is supported by the Pacific Community (SPC), an international development organisation owned and governed by its 26 members that is committed to enhancing the well-being

of pacific peoples. In addition to the five member countries of the PACSAR Steering Committee, through SPC membership all other Pacific Island Countries or Territories are members of the PACSAR family.

## PACSAR members

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Australia

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Cook Islands

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Federated States of  
Micronesia

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Fiji

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France (French Polynesia,  
New Caledonia, Wallis  
and Futuna)

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Kiribati

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Marshall Islands

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Nauru

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New Zealand

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Niue

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Northern Marianas

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Palau

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Papua New Guinea

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Pitcairn Islands

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Samoa

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Solomon Islands

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Tokelau

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Tonga

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Tuvalu

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United States of America  
(American Samoa and  
Guam)

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Vanuatu

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# How We Work

A key mechanism for enhancing SAR capability and cooperation across the Pacific is the biennial PACSAR workshop. This workshop is hosted by one of the PACSAR Steering Committee members, and provides an opportunity for personnel involved in SAR to come together and share knowledge, ideas and expertise, and build collaborative relationships.

On the alternate years, the Steering Committee meets together to discuss work within each member's SRR, and to collaborate on each of their capability building programmes. The work of the Steering Committee is supported by the SPC which provides all secretariat functions.











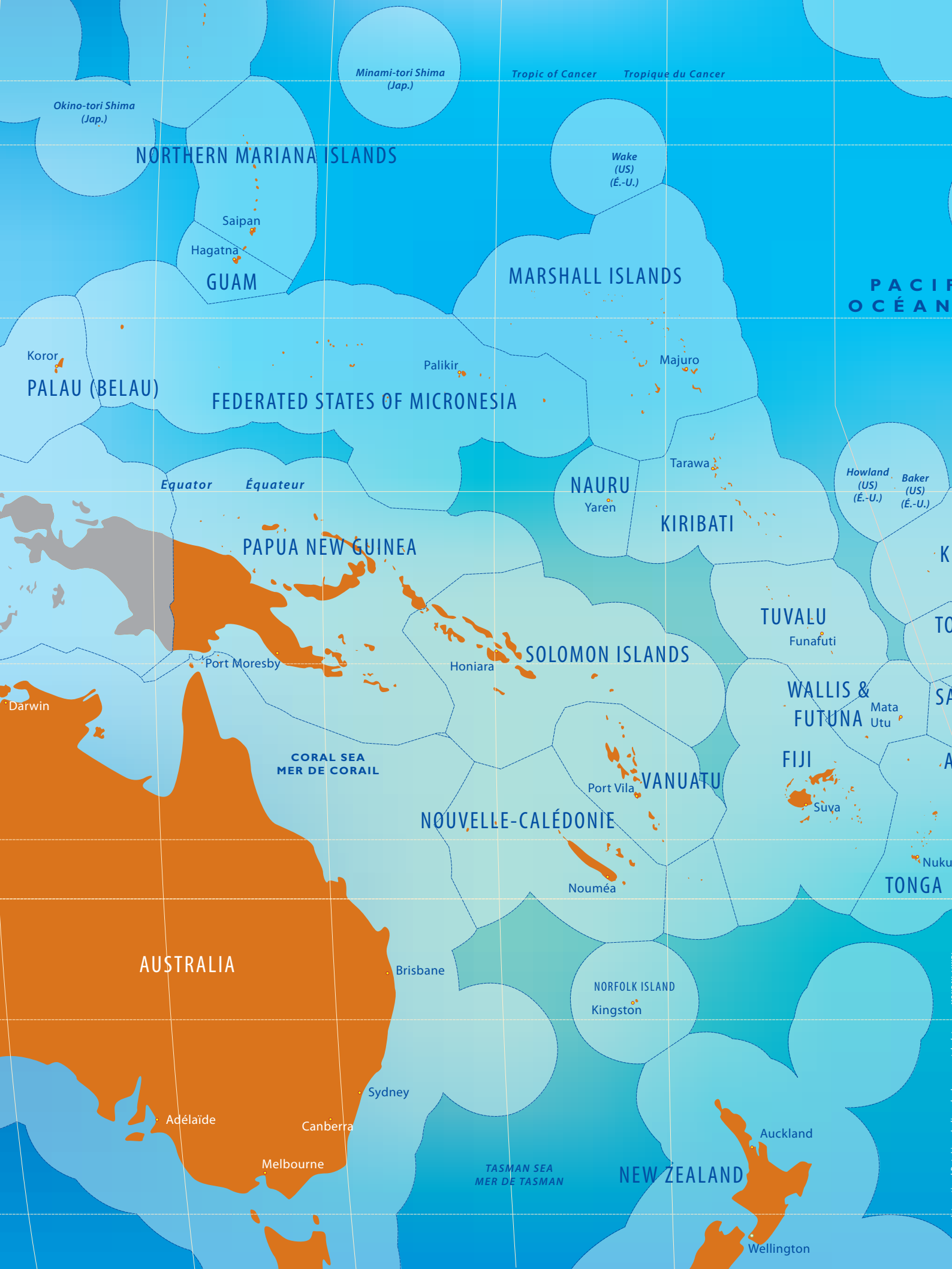
# Our Strategic Plan 2017–2021

**MOTTO** “Saving lives together in the Pacific”

**VISION** All member countries working together across the pacific region to save lives through effective search and rescue.

**MISSION** By 2021 the SAR capability of each PICT in the pacific region, and of the region as a collective, has measurably improved in line with international standards and our success measures, in order to respond to distress.











A full-page background image showing a small sailboat with a white sail and a red hull on a vast, calm blue sea. The sky is a clear, light blue. In the bottom right corner, there are some green, out-of-focus leaves. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of the image.

# **Key Capability Building Challenges**

**(PILLARS OF EFFECTIVE SAR)**



# Responsible SAR Governance

Within each country, Search and Rescue efforts invariably involve many agencies with a variety of roles including oversight, funding, coordination, and response.

Responsible SAR Governance requires cooperation across key agencies to provide strategic leadership – to ensure that SAR response capability is adequate to respond to SAR demands – and operational coordination – to ensure that the SAR system operates in an effective and efficient manner. This includes appropriate structures and mechanisms to support this cooperation, and where appropriate engaging with, and mobilising, the community.

## Our measures of success

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PICTs have underpinning legislation for SAR response capability

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PICTs have a national SAR committee to provide strategic leadership and operational coordination

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PICTs have a national SAR plan

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PICTs sign the Maritime Search and Rescue technical agreement for cooperation 2013

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# Efficient SAR Coordination

SAR Coordination begins once the Coordinating Authority receives notice of a distress situation. It involves information gathering to build and maintain situational awareness, planning a response, tasking assets to provide search and rescue response, communicating with and coordinating between all involved to ensure efficiency and safety, and monitoring and documenting the response as it progresses.

It also involves reviewing responses to identify lessons and improve the SAR system. Efficient coordination requires the coordinating authority to have the right people, apparatus, and processes in place.

## Our measures of success

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Maritime and Aeronautical (or Joint) SAR coordinating authorities are established

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Coordinating authorities have appropriate systems, processes and procedures

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Coordinating authorities have appropriate communication systems and response planning tools

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A list of SAR deployable assets is developed and maintained

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Coordinating authorities have an effective system for monitoring and documenting response activities

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A lessons management process is in place to support continuous improvement

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# Effective SAR

# Operational Response

The Coordinating Authority is responsible for developing a response plan that is appropriate for the unique circumstances of any distress situation. The core goal will always be to find and rescue those in distress, but this must be done safely.

SAR responders should only be tasked to perform activities within the bounds of their experience and training. A base skill is understanding how to execute a search plan. Safety should always be a key consideration.

SAR responders must be clear about their role, understand how their contribution fits into the larger response, and have an effective means of communicating their activity and progress to the Coordinating Authority.

Effective SAR operational response capability is developed through a combination of training, exercising, and real SAR experience.

## Our measures of success

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SAR Standard Operating Procedures that align with the national plan are developed and in use

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Training needs analysis is undertaken; training plans are developed and implemented

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Exercises that focus on preparedness for key risks are conducted

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Effective communications systems are established to support SAR coordination and response

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# SAR Prevention

SAR prevention is comprised of two elements: reducing the incidence of distress events so less SAR response is required, and reducing the seriousness of distress incidents so they can be resolved faster and more successfully.

Preventing distress events is mainly achieved through public education and regulation, and focuses on developing a safety culture, where people are more aware of the risks associated with marine activities and better equipped to manage or avoid them.

Reducing the seriousness of distress events involves increasing the likelihood of a successful and rapid resolution to an incident, for example through carriage of distress beacons, or through other communications equipment (to take the search component out of the response), and through increasing detectability and survivability – for example by educating mariners how to increase likelihood of radar detection, and encouraging the wearing of life jackets.

## Our measures of success

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Maritime safety education programmes are implemented

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Maritime safety regulations (and compliance regimes) are in place

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Mariners have access to appropriate safety equipment

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PICTs are encouraged to ratify various safety conventions of International Maritime Organisation, and the International Civil Aviation Organisation

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Increased use of technology based safety equipment e.g. distress beacons, radios, cellular phones and other emerging technology

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# How we will Deliver

## PACSAR Steering Committee

The PACSAR Steering Committee leads the coordination of SAR capability building work across the Pacific, and is committed to collectively exploring ways to address the key capability building challenges. The committee also helps to coordinate SAR engagement from international organisations, such as the governmental International Maritime Organisation and the International Civil Aviation Organisation, and NGOs such as the International Maritime Rescue Federation, in the region.



Sixth Pacific Regional Maritime Search and Rescue Workshop  
13–17 April 2015 Noumea, New Caledonia

## PACSAR workshops

A member of the Steering Committee will continue to host a PACSAR workshop every two years. These week long workshops are a key opportunity for SAR leaders and practitioners from across the Pacific to build relationships, learn from each other, and hear about new technology and best practice in SAR coordination and response.

## Pacific capability building programme

The members of the Steering Committee are each supporting aligned capability building activities in their own and neighbouring SRRs. This support usually includes:

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Providing a SAR capability assessment

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Engagement visits with the PICT

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Supporting development of a capability building work plan

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Identification of opportunities for international support (e.g. from IMO/IMRF)

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## Inter-country SAR collaboration

Because many countries across the region are on a similar journey of either building SAR capability or supporting others to build their SAR capability, cooperation across countries is a key way of accelerating the progress of the region as a whole. Through PACSAR mechanisms, we will share resources, expertise and experiences between PICTs and across the region.





## **Key Contacts**

### **PAC SAR Steering Committee**

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#### **Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand, Maritime New Zealand (JRCC New Zealand)**

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#### **Australian Maritime Safety Authority (JRCC Australia)**

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#### **United States Coastguard 14th District (JRCC Honolulu)**

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#### **Fiji Maritime Surveillance Centre (MRCC Suva)**

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#### **Centre de coordination de sauvetage aéro maritime en Polynésie française (JRCC Tahiti)**

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#### **Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre Noumea (MRCC Noumea)**

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#### **Pacific Community (SPC) (Secretariat)**

Phone: + 67 9 337 0733

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#### **Websites**

<https://www.imo.org/>

<http://www.spc.int/>

<http://www.icao.int/>

[international-maritime-rescue.org](http://international-maritime-rescue.org)

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