



The Pacific Search and Rescue Steering Committee

STRATEGIC PLAN
2022-2026

Saving lives together in the Pacific

Foreword

As neighbours, the Pacific is our home. This region is beautiful but not without challenges when it comes to saving those who find themselves in need.

Since the endorsement of the 2017-21 Strategic Plan, the Pacific Search and Rescue Steering Committee and member countries have been working together to consolidate our relationships and meet the challenges identified in the plan's roadmap. The plan identified four areas to build capability across governance, coordination, response and prevention. These areas are just as important today and the 2022-26 Strategic Plan will continue to focus on developing and deepening those capability areas.

As we strengthen relationships across all Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), our search and rescue response can only get stronger. Throughout 2022-26 we will continue to work together, learn together and support one another; in the important business of saving lives through search and rescue.



Michael Kinley
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Maritime Safety Authority



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

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 and 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 and Territories are members of the PACSAR family.

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.

The Steering Committee recognises the disruption that COVID-19 and the global pandemic had on face-to-face engagement, which led to workshops being postponed.

PACSAR members

Australia	Marshall Islands	Samoa
Cook Islands	Nauru	Solomon Islands
Federated States of Micronesia	New Zealand	Tokelau
Fiji	Niue	Tonga
France (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna)	Northern Marianas	Tuvalu
Kiribati	Palau	United States of America (American Samoa and Guam)
	Papua New Guinea	
	Pitcairn Islands	Vanuatu



Our Strategic Plan 2022-2026

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 2026 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 tropical island with palm trees and a small boat on the water. The boat is orange and white, with 'POLICE RESCUE' written on its side. It is on a body of water with a rocky shore in the background.

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
- operational coordination – to ensure that the SAR system operates in an effective and efficient manner
- appropriate structures and mechanisms – to support this cooperation and help with mobilising.

Our measures of success

PICTs have underpinning legislation for SAR response capability.

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

PICTs have a national SAR plan.

PICTs sign the Maritime Search and Rescue technical arrangement for cooperation 2013.

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

Efficient SAR Coordination

The steering committee supports coordination ahead of distress situations, to allow improved responses. This includes:

- sharing information to build situational awareness
- sharing planning to enable coordination during a response
- communicating throughout to ensure efficiency and safety of those involved
- reviewing processes after a response to identify how we can improve the SAR system.

Effective coordination requires the coordinating authority to have the right people, equipment, and processes in place.

Our measures of success

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

Coordinating authorities have appropriate systems, processes and procedures.

Coordinating authorities have appropriate communication systems and response planning tools.

A list of SAR deployable assets is developed and maintained.

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

A lessons management process is in place to support continuous improvement.



Effective SAR Operational Response

The steering committee is responsible for developing a response framework 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 steering committee.

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

Our measures of success

SAR standard operating procedures that align with the national plan are developed and in use.

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

Exercises that focus on preparedness for key risks are conducted.

Effective communications systems are established to support SAR coordination and response.



SAR Prevention

SAR prevention is comprised of two elements:

- reducing the incidence of distress events so less SAR response is required
- reducing the seriousness of distress incidents so they can be resolved faster and more successfully.

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



Our measures of success

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, radios, cellular phones and other emerging technology.

How we will Deliver

PACSAR steering committee

The PACSAR steering committee leads the coordination of SAR capability building work across the Pacific region, 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.



PACSAR workshops

The global pandemic has changed our ability to travel. It is hoped that future workshops can support both face-to-face engagement and capability demonstrations.

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:

- Providing a SAR capability assessment
- Engagement visits with the PICT
- Supporting development of a capability building work plan
- Identification of opportunities for international support (e.g. from IMO/IMRF).



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

PACSAR steering committee

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Websites

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