

United States National Search and Rescue Committee Interagency Agreement

PURPOSE

1. This Agreement provides for a federal-level Committee to coordinate civil search and rescue (SAR) matters of interagency interest within the United States. This Agreement supersedes the United States Search and Rescue Committee Agreement of 1999.

BACKGROUND

2. The National Search and Rescue Conference of 1973, when considering the need to establish a continuing interagency group to oversee the United States *National Search and Rescue Plan* (NSP), established a standing interagency committee to oversee the NSP and to act as a coordinating forum for national SAR matters.
 - a. Originally called the Interagency Committee on Search and Rescue, the name was changed by the 1999 Agreement referred to in the paragraph above to the National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC).
 - b. This Agreement replaces the 1999 Agreement and its adoption coincides with adoption of a new NSP.

SPONSORSHIP

3. The Commandant of the Coast Guard is the sponsor of NSARC. The Commandant shall:
 - a. Designate an executive-level person to Chair the Committee, who shall 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 Agencies of the Committee are as follows:
 - Department of Homeland Security;
 - Department of Defense;
 - Department of Transportation;
 - Department of Commerce;
 - Department of Interior;
 - National Aeronautics and Space Administration; and
 - Federal Communications Commission.
 - a. Each of these Member Agencies shall designate one representative by name or position to serve as its primary Committee Member, and another to serve as its Alternate Committee Member.

- b. Each Committee Member may call upon officials from his or her agency to serve as Advisors and to participate in meetings of the Committee, or of subsidiary groups of the Committee.
- c. Others 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.

NATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE PLAN PARTICIPATION

5. Member Agencies of NSARC are, by virtue of their membership, also Participants to the *National Search and Rescue Plan of the United States*.

OBJECTIVES

6. 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 civil SAR services;
 - b. Hold sole responsibility for the provisions of the NSP;
 - c. Serve as the primary coordinating forum within the federal government for the conduct and support of civil SAR operations covered by the NSP, and for matters relating to national civil SAR policies and positions;
 - d. Administer the *National Search and Rescue Supplement* to the *International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual* for interagency guidance on implementing the NSP;
 - e. Seek to ensure compatibility between the NSP and the National Response Plan (NRP) so that the NSP can be implemented independently or concurrently with the NRP during an incident of national significance;
 - f. Promote 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 civil SAR services, and to reduce the associated risks;
 - g. Help coordinate the civil SAR efforts of the NSARC Member Agencies with other national and international government, private, and volunteer organizations;
 - h. Promote the effective use of all available resources to support civil SAR;
 - i. Foster appropriate use of SAR agreements and other arrangements and plans to improve cooperation and mutual support among the various national and international civil SAR communities;
 - j. Promote close cooperation among civilian and military authorities and organizations for provision of effective civil SAR services;
 - k. Promote analysis and initiatives to help citizens avoid or cope with distress situations; and
 - l. Consider, as appropriate, contingency plans for use of SAR resources in emergencies other than civil SAR.

PROCEDURES

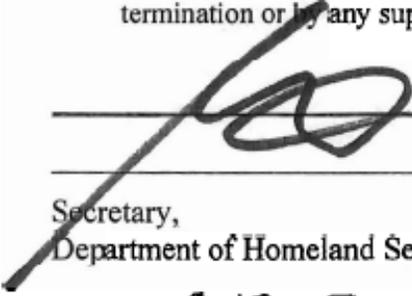
7. The following procedures shall be followed in conducting the business of the Committee:
 - a. The Committee shall schedule regular meetings on at least a quarterly basis.
 - b. The Chair or any Member Agency via its respective Committee Member may call a special meeting when deemed necessary.

- c. Meetings will be properly documented by the 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 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 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 shall be via the Commandant of the Coast Guard.
- e. The normal procedure for addition of a federal Agency as an NSARC Member Agency and NSP Participant shall be as follows:
 - 1) Based on a unanimous vote of the Committee, the Chair will extend a written invitation to the prospective Member Agency, and the Agency will respond to the Chair in writing of the Agency's acceptance; and
 - 2) The Chair will then notify each Member Agency, via the Member Agency's Executive Secretary or an individual designated to receive such notification, of the acceptance. If no Member Agency objects within 60 days, the invited Agency will from that time become a NSARC Member Agency and a NSP Participant. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
- f. Alternatively, an additional federal Agency may become a Member Agency and NSP Participant by mutual written agreement of all current Member Agencies and the prospective Member Agency.
- g. Termination of an Agency's Committee Membership shall automatically terminate its status as an NSP Participant; such termination shall be accomplished by the Agency's written notification to the other Member Agencies at least six 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 shall be included.
- i. Nothing in this Agreement shall be viewed to obligate the Member Agencies to comply with decisions of the Committee.

ENTRY INTO FORCE, AMENDMENT, RENEWAL, AND TERMINATION

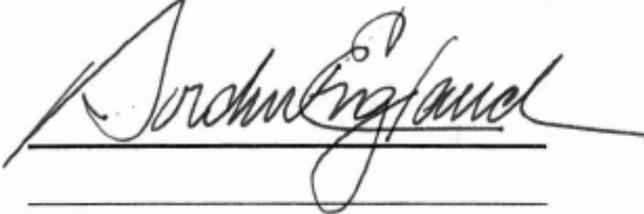
- 8. This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of the first Committee meeting following the completion of the signatures by the Secretaries (or equivalent level authority) of all of the Member Agencies.
- 9. Based on a unanimous vote of the Committee, any proposed amendment(s) to this Agreement or to the NSP must be adopted by one of the following means:
 - a. The Chair will notify each Member Agency, via the Member Agency's Executive Secretary or an individual designated to receive such notification, of the proposed amendment(s). If no Member Agency objects within 60 days, the amendment(s) will be considered adopted. Such notifications, designations, and objections must be in writing.
 - b. The amendment(s) shall be adopted by mutual written agreement of all Member Agencies.
- 10. This Agreement, as amended, shall be automatically renewed on 1 January 2012 and every five years thereafter unless superseded by a new arrangement or terminated.

11. This Agreement may be terminated with the written consent of the Member Agencies at the time of termination or by any superseding arrangement.



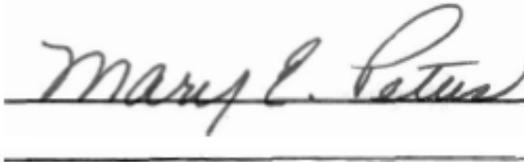
Secretary,
Department of Homeland Security

Date: 4-18-07



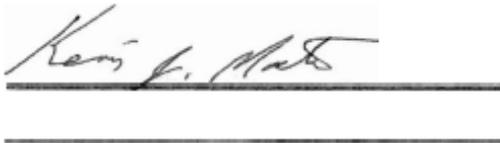
Deputy Secretary of Defense,
Department of Defense

Date: JUL 18 2007



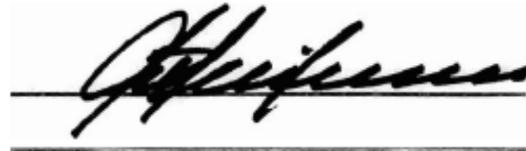
Secretary,
Department of Transportation

Date: 6/15/07



Chairman,
Federal Communications Commission

Date: 5-19-07



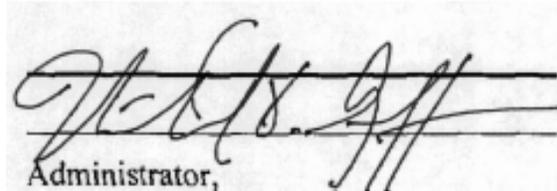
Secretary,
Department of Commerce

Date: _____



Secretary,
Department of the Interior

Date: JUN 08 2007



Administrator,
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Date: AUG 02 2007