World Bank/OECS Emergency Recovery and Disaster Management Project

Government of Saint Lucia

Maritime Search and Rescue Plan

Document of the National Emergency Management Plan

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Approved by *[Commander Marine Police]*	*Approved by* *[NEMAC]*
June 21, 2006	
[Date of Approval]	*[Date of Approval]*


Cap Pt.
Pigeon I.
Rodney Bay
Gros Islet
CASTRIES
Babonneau
Roseau
La Caye
Dennery
Mt. Gimie
Praslin
Micoud
Canelles
Choiseul
Laborie
Vieux Fort
Maria Is.

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Part I General Information.

1. - Acronyms/Abbreviations.

AM	Amplitude Modulation
ATS	Air Traffic Service
CARICOM	The Caribbean Community
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CDRU	CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CES	Coast Earth Station
CRS	Coast Radio Station
CS	Call Sign
CSP	Commence Search Pattern
CSS	Co-ordinator Surface Search
DF	Direction Finding
DME	Distance Measurement Equipment
DPRA	Disaster Preparedness and Response Act (Saint Lucia)
DSC	Digital Selective Calling
ELT	Emergency Locator Transmitter
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EPIRB	Emergency Positioning-Indicating Radiobeacon
ETA	Estimated Time of arrival
FM	Frequency Modulation
GEOREF	Geographical Reference System
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GIS	Government Information Service of Saint Lucia (Also SLU/GIS)
GMDSS	Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
HF	High Frequency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICS	Incident Command System
IMO	International Maritime Organisation
INTERCO	International Code of Signals
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KHz	Kilohertz
MAREC	Maritime SAR Recognition Code
MERSAR	Merchant Ship Search and Rescue Manual
MF	Medium Frequency
MHz	Megahertz
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOT	Ministry of Tourism
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre.
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organisation.
NEMP	National Emergency Management Plan (2002-2003)
NM	Nautical mile
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

OPAC	Oil Pollution Action Committee
OPS	Operations
OSC	On-scene Commander
OSV	Ocean Station vessel
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
R	Search Radius
RB	Rescue Boat
RCC	Rescue Co-ordination Centre
RSC	Rescue Sub-Centre
RSLPF	Royal Saint Lucia Police Force
RTG	Radiotelegraphy
RU	Rescue Unit
RV	Rescue Vessel
S	Track Spacing
SAR	Search and Rescue
SITREP	Situation Report
SLASPA	Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority
SLMPU	Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit
SLU	Saint Lucia
SLU-GIS	Government Information Service (Saint Lucia)
SLU/NEMP	Saint Lucia National Emergency Plan
SMC	Search and Rescue Mission Co-ordinator
SOLAS	International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (IMO)
SOP	Standing Operating Procedures
SRR	Search and Rescue Region
TLX	Telex
UN	United Nations.
UTC	Co-ordinated Universal time
VHF	Very High Frequency
WHO	World Health Organisation.
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation

2.- Definitions/Glossary

Alerting Post Any facility other than a coast radio station designed to serve as an intermediary between a person reporting an incident or other emergency and a rescue co-ordination centre or rescue sub-centre

Alert Phase A situation wherein apprehension exists as to the safety of a ship or other craft and of the persons on board.

Captain Master of a ship, pilot in command of an aircraft, commanding officer of a warship or an operator of any other vessel

Coast Watching Unit A land Unit, stationary or mobile, designated to maintain a watch on the safety of vessels in coastal areas.

C-ordinator Surface Search A vessel, other than a rescue unit, designated to co-ordinate surface search and rescue operations within a specified search area.

Craft Any surface craft or submersible of any kind and size.

Distress phase A situation wherein there is a reasonable certainty that a ship or other craft or a person is threatened by grave and immediate assistance.
Emergency Phase A generic term meaning, as the case may be, uncertainty phase, alert phase or distress phase.
Merchant Ship Search and rescue Manual (MERSAR Manual). Manual published by the International Maritime Organisation to provide guidance for those who, during emergencies at sea, may require assistance for others or who may be able to render such assistance themselves.
On-Scene Commander The Commander of a rescue unit designated to co-ordinate search and rescue operations within a specified search area.
Probability Area. An area in which it is believed that a distress case or potential distress case may be located.
Rescue Co-ordination Centre. A unit responsible for promoting efficient organisation of search and rescue services and for co-ordinating the conduct of search and rescue operations within a search and rescue region.
Rescue Sub-centre. A unit subordinate to a rescue co-ordination centre established to complement the latter within a specified area within a search and rescue region.
Rescue Unit. A unit composed of trained personnel and provided with equipment suitable for the expeditious conduct of search and rescue operations.
SAR Unit. A specialised unit for search and rescue purposes.
Search and Rescue Region. An area of defined dimensions within which search and rescue services are provided.
Target. A ship or other craft missing or in distress or survivors in the sea for which a search is being made.
To Ditch. In the case of an aircraft, to make a forced landing on water.
Uncertainty Phase. A situation wherein uncertainty exists as to the safety of a ship or other craft and the persons on board.

3.- Introduction.

The Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan is part of the Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan (SLU/NEMP) as follows:

Table 3.1 The Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan SLU/NEMP

Section	Subsection	Name of section	Name of Sub-section
01		The Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan	
02		**Policies & Guidelines**	
	01		Donations and Importation of Relief Supplies Policy
	02		Emergency Shelter Management Policy
	03		Emergency Housing Policy
	04		Mitigation Policy
	05		Travel Policy
	06		Management and Disposal of Dead Bodies in Disasters Policy

03		**National Emergency Plans**	
	01		The Saint Lucia National Hurricane Plan
	02		The Saint Lucia National Earthquake Response Plan
	03		The Saint Lucia National Volcanic Eruption Response Plan
	04		The Saint Lucia Oil Spill Contingency Plan
	05		The Saint Lucia National Mitigation Plan
	06		The Saint Lucia Stress Response Team Plan
	07		The Saint Lucia National Flood Plan
	08		The Saint Lucia National Hazardous Materials Plan.
	09		The Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan.
	10		The Saint Lucia Land Search and Rescue Plan.
04		**Sectoral Plans**	
	01		The Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities Plan
	02		The Saint Lucia National Emergency Health Sector Plan
	03		The Hospitality Industry Crisis Management Plan
	04		The Saint Lucia Private Sector Response Plan
05		**Specific Plans**	
	01		Mass Crowd Events Plan
	02		Anse La Raye Evacuation Plan.
	03		Model Plan for the District Disaster Committees in Saint Lucia
	04		The Saint Lucia Prison Emergency Plan
	05		The Port Authority Cruise Line Ships Plan
	06		The Saint Lucia Seaports Contingency Plan

Table 3.1 The Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan SLU/NEMP (cont.)

This plan was written within the World Bank/OECS Emergency Recovery and Disaster Management Project by Arturo López-Portillo, Emergency Planning and Mitigation Advisor to the National Emergency Management office of Saint Lucia. The Advisor met with the Marine Unit Commander and visited the Coast Guard Head Quarters in Vigie to collect information for this plan. The Advisor also met with the Director of Maritime affairs that provided valuable information regarding maritime search and rescue and about international conventions regarding maritime SAR.

The Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan is responsibility of the Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit that depends of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force. However, in the Plan there are activities that involve other agencies.

The Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan will be referred to as the Maritime SR Plan or as the Plan. This Plan is subsection 09 of section 03 of the Saint Lucia National Emergency management Plan.

The Plan includes general information about maritime SAR, about how maritime SAR is currently conducted in Saint Lucia and includes SAR emergency procedures to activate the response in the case of calls from ships in distress. The plan also gives general recommendations to improve and update the plan itself and its procedures as well as the level of preparedness and response in the case of need of maritime SAR operations.

This is the first version of the Plan and the responsibility for its revision, improvement and updating belongs to the Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit.

It is hoped that the Plan becomes a useful tool for the Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit and other agencies involved giving a better response to ships in distress in Saint Lucian waters and beyond.

Part II. Maritime Search and Rescue

4.- International Conventions.

There are several international conventions that include activities regarding maritime search and rescue for the Parties.

States which are Parties to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), or the Convention on the High Seas, 1958, are required to set up SAR organisations.

Regulation 15, Chapter V, on the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, reads:

"(a) Each Contracting Government undertakes to ensure that any necessary arrangements are made for coast watching and for rescue of persons in distress at sea round its coasts. These arrangements should include the establishment, operation and maintenance of such maritime safety facilities as are deemed practicable and necessary having regard to the density of the seagoing traffic and the navigational dangers and should, so far as possible, afford adequate means of locating and rescuing such persons.

(b) Each Contracting Government undertakes to make available information concerning its existing rescue facilities and the plans for changes therein, if any."

Article 12 (2) of the Convention on the High Seas, 1958, reads: "Every coastal State shall promote the establishment and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue service regarding safety on and over the sea and – where circumstances so require- by way of mutual regional arrangements co-operate with neighbouring States for this purpose."

The International Conference on Maritime Search and Rescue from 1979 describes terms and definitions, organisation, co-operation, preparatory measures, operating procedures and ship reporting systems which the Parties of the convention should follow for the establishment, maintenance and operation of a search and rescue organisation in their countries.

In general, Parties to this Convention shall:

- Ensure the necessary arrangements are made for the provision of adequate search and rescue services for persons in distress at sea round their coasts.

- Arrange that their search and rescue services are able to give prompt response to distress calls.

- Ensure that assistance be provided to any person in distress at sea, regardless of nationality or status or the circumstances in which that person is found.

- Establish national machinery for the overall co-ordination of search and rescue services.

- Establish rescue co-ordination centres and sub-centres as appropriate.

- Have adequate means for the receipt of distress communications via a coast radio station or otherwise. Every centre or sub-centre shall also have adequate means of communications with its rescue units and with rescue co-ordination centres or sub-centres, as appropriate, in adjacent areas.

- Provide each rescue unit with facilities and equipment appropriate to its tasks.

5.- Maritime Search and Rescue Organisations.

From the IMO Search and Rescue Manual, we have that the basic requirements of a SAR organisation are the means to alert the organisation, detect ships, other craft and persons in distress, or potential distress, and effect their rescue.

An appropriate authority, institution or group, should be given responsibility for the SAR service and may be nominated head of the SAR service. It is the task of the head of the SAR service to set up an efficient organisation in the search and rescue region (SRR) or area of responsibility to satisfy the requirements, and to make use of the facilities already available.

The main operational unit if a maritime SAR service is needed is the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC). The RCC, one of which is established in each maritime MRR, is the centre from which a SAR operation is co-ordinated and directed. When direct liaison between the RCC and the facilities in a sector of a SRR is not possible, e.g., because of inadequate communications, a rescue sub-centre (RSC) may have to be established in that sector. This is an intermediate unit which will operate under the authority of the RCC.

Each SAR operation is carried out under the direction and supervision of a SAR mission co-ordinator (SMC). This function exists only for the duration of an operation or exercise and is carried out by the RCC chief himself, or a person designated by him.

The operational facilities of a SAR service are the facilities which are made available to it by various authorities. Whilst these facilities remain administratively under their respective authorities, they are under the control of the SMC during SAR operations. They are grouped, whenever possible, into rescue units to increase their operational efficiency.

The main alerting facilities of a SAR are coast radio stations (CRS) and designated alerting posts. The information collected by these facilities is forwarded immediately to the RCC which decides on a course of action.

Since the administrative arrangements of States vary, it may not be possible to adhere to a uniform pattern for the structure of a SAR organisation. Much will depend on the facilities available, the type and density of a traffic and the nature of the area to be covered.

An example of a SAR organisation is the following

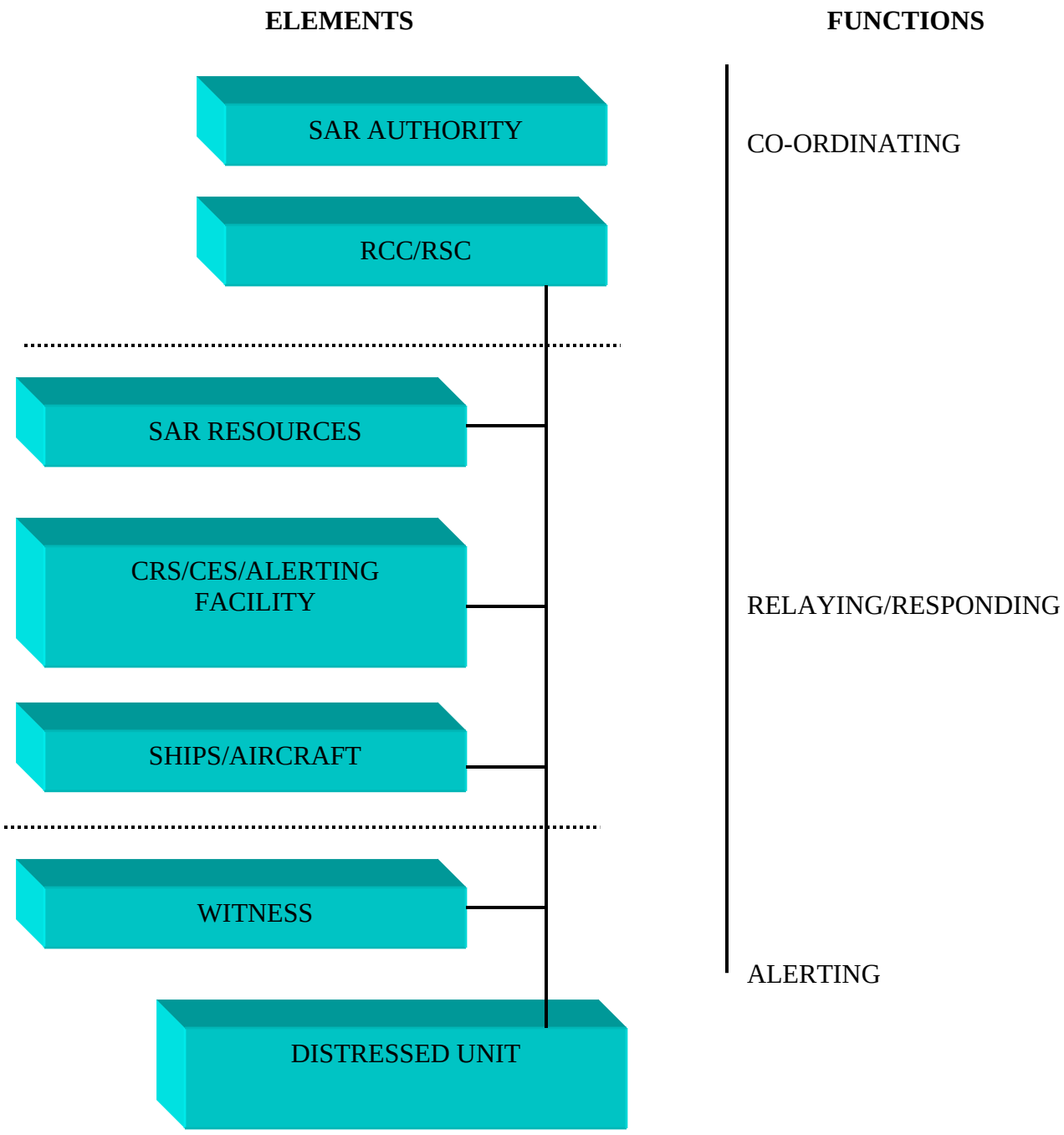


Figure 5.1.- Example of Distressing Alerting and Search and Rescue Organisations.

6.- Co-operation between States.

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea done at Montego Bay on December 1982 states in its article 98, paragraph 2 that "Every coastal State shall promote the establishment, operation and maintenance of an adequate and effective search and rescue service regarding safety on and over the sea and, when circumstances so require, by way of mutual regional arrangements co-operate with neighbouring States for this purpose"

The International Conference on Maritime Search and Rescue mentions that Parties shall co-ordinate their search and rescue organisations and should, whenever necessary, co-ordinate search and rescue operations with those of neighbouring States.

Neighbouring States may find it advantageous to pool suitable resources for SAR as this will reduce the number of facilities each State will have to establish individually and will allow a better coverage of the areas concerned.

The IMO Search and Rescue Manual apply mainly to those States which have decided to establish their own SAR organisation. The Manual will also be applicable to cases where a number of States have decided to establish a joint SAR organisation and Inter-State procedures.

To avoid the implication that a SAR organisation should be confined to one State, the word 'National' has been avoided by the IMO SAR Manual. No SAR organisation can be strictly national since a search area may overlap the area of responsibility of another State and a search and/or rescue may be better carried out by a neighbouring State.

7.- Communications.

The following frequencies are available for safety communications between vessels and aircraft.

a.- 2182 kHz
Aircraft designated for maritime SAR operations are required to have this frequency.

b.- 156.8 Mhz (VHF Channel 16. Frequency Modulation.)
This frequency is the international distress safety and calling frequency for the maritime mobile radiotelephone service in the bands between 156 and 174 MHz. This is the VHF maritime distress frequency carried by most ships. To enable designated SAR aircraft to communicate with vessels in distress and other SAR units, it is advisable for them to have capability to transmit and receive on this frequency.

c.- 3023 and 5680 kHz
These are SAR on-scene HF radiotelephony frequencies. Designated SAR aircraft and most civil aircraft, if carrying HF communications equipment, can operate on these frequencies, which may also be used by vessels and coast radio stations when engaged in co-ordinated SAR operations.

d.- 121.5 and 243 Mhz (Amplitude Modulation)

These are international aeronautical distress frequencies. All designated SAR aircraft and civil aircraft carry equipment operating on 121.5 MHz, which may also be used as stations of the maritime mobile service for safety purposes. All aircraft on over-water flights are recommended to guard this frequency, cockpit duties and equipment limitations permitting. Since aeronautical survival craft radio equipment operates on the frequency 121.5 and/or 243 MHz, designated aircraft are required to carry both frequencies.

e.- 123.1 MHz (Amplitude Modulation)

This is the aeronautical on-scene frequency which may be used by aircraft and vessels as the VHF common frequency when engaged in SAR operations.

Except for specially designated maritime SAR facilities, none of the frequencies of the aeronautical band listed here in point 3 to 5 above are normally carried by ships.

When carried aboard ships or other craft, emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs) are capable of transmitting signals on one or more of the frequencies 2182 kHz, 121.5 MHz and 243 MHz. The purpose of the EPIRB signals is to indicate that a distress exists and to facilitate the location of survivors in SAR operations. For this to be effective searching craft should be able to home on to the frequency used by the EPIRB.

Civil aircraft, when operating over ocean areas, are required to carry an emergency location beacon and/or survival craft radio equipment operating on the frequencies 121.5 and/or 243 MHz. Designated SAR aircraft are required to be capable of homing these frequencies for locating a distress scene and survivors.

The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, contains an obligatory provision for the captain of a vessel, on receiving a message that persons are in distress at sea, to proceed to their assistance. Merchant vessels are frequently the nearest of all sources of available rescue vessels. It is therefore important that RCCs are able to ascertain the positions of vessels through whatever means available.

8.- Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. GMDSS.

According to “GMDSS for small crafts” by Alan Clements (See bibliography at the end of this plan), the GMDSS is a new and fully automated system using satellite and digital communication techniques that will allow radio watch keeping by shore and ship stations to be maintained automatically. With this system a Distress Alert can be sent automatically at the push of a button within a few seconds giving the vessel’s exact location, identity and the nature of distress. It allows distress alerting directly to shore-based RCCs.

GMDSS also covers the entire procedural and communications infrastructure needed to initiate a rescue and to co-ordinate subsequent on-scene activities. When fully

operational, GMDSS will not only make a significant contribution to marine safety, it will also automate and simplify all routine communications between a vessel and port authorities, pilots, other vessels, coast radio stations, etc. On board the vessel alarm will sound if attention to an incoming call is required.

GMDSS will substitute manual operations and will make distress call more rapid and SAR operations faster and more effective.

9.- Emergency Phases.

As described in Chapter 5 of the Annex to Attachment 1 to the International Conference on Maritime Search and Rescue (1974), we have that for operational purposes, the following emergency phases shall be distinguished:

- Uncertainty phase:
  - When a vessel has been reported overdue at its destination
  - When a vessel has failed to make an expected position or safety report.

- Alert phase
  - When, following the uncertainty phase, attempts to establish contact with the vessel have failed and inquiries addressed to other appropriate sources have been unsuccessful; or
  - When information has been received indicating that the operating efficiency of a vessel is impaired but not to the extent that a distress situation is likely.

- Distress phase:
  - When positive information is received that a vessel or a person is in grave and imminent danger and in need of immediate assistance; or
  - When, following the alert phase, further unsuccessful attempts to establish contact with the vessel and more widespread unsuccessful inquiries point to the probability that the vessel is in distress; or
  - When information is received which indicates that the operating efficiency of a vessel has been impaired to the extent that a distress situation is likely.

10.- Emergency Call

Emergency calls from ships can be:

Distress call

To be used if in grave and imminent danger and you require immediate assistance.
Example: vessel sinking or on fire.

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday
This is [Name and call sign if you have one] (spoken three times)
Mayday
[Name and call sign if you have one]
Details of the vessel's position
Nature of distress and assistance required
Other information including number of persons on board

It is recommended that the ship also activates an EPIRB in addition to making a Mayday call.

Urgency call

The urgency call is used when there is concern on the safety of your vessel or a person. Example: medical emergency.

Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Pan Pan
Hello all stations, Hello all stations, Hello all stations
This is [Name and call sign if you have one] (spoken three times)
Details of the vessels position
Details of assistance required and other information

Safety call

The safety warning is used if you need to broadcast and important safety warning. Example a partly submerged object or an accidentally activated EPIRB.

Sécurité, Sécurité, Sécurité.
Hello all stations, Hello all stations, Hello all stations
This is [Name and call sign if you have one] (spoken three times)
Details of the warning / announcement

A coast radio station (CRS) usually receives the first information that a ship or other craft is in distress. A CRS is required by international regulations to relay this information to the SAR authorities.

As a result, a RCC or a RSC will often receive first notification that a ship or other aircraft is in distress from a CRS with which it is associated.

11.- Components of the Distress Message.

According to the MERSAR, important components of the distress message include:

- Identification of the ship
- Position

- Nature of distress and kind of assistance required
- Any other information which might facilitate the rescue 8e.g., course and speed if under way, the master's (captain) intention, including the number of persons, if any, leaving the ship; type of cargo, if dangerous).

It will be important to furnish relevant information such as:

- Weather in immediate vicinity, direction and force of wind, sea and swell, visibility, presence of navigational dangers (e.g. reefs);
- Time of abandoning ship;
- Number of crew remaining onboard;
- Number of seriously injured;
- Number and type of survival craft launched;
- Emergency location aids in survival craft or in the sea;
- (For casualties under way, particularly where these retain the use or partial use of engines and steering) course and speed.

It will be impracticable to include all information in the initial distress message. The timing of subsequent transmissions will be governed by circumstances. In general, if time allows, a series of short messages will be preferable to one or two long messages.

Distress messages should always be cancelled as soon as saving of life is no longer required or search is terminated.

A Coast Radio Station (CRS) usually receives the first information that a ship or other craft is in distress. A CRS is required by international regulations to relay this information to the SAR authorities.

As a result, a RCC or RSC will often receive first notification that a ship or other craft is in distress from a CRS with which it is associated.

The notification from a CRS to a RCC or RSC will contain, if available, the following information:

- Name and call sign (or ship station identity) of the ship or craft;
- Position or last known position of the ship or craft;
- Nature of the emergency;
- Type of assistance needed;
- Time of communication with the shift or craft;
- Description of the ship or craft;
- Intentions of the captain,
- Any other information.

12.- Maritime Search and Rescue

The procedures for maritime search and rescue are long, complex and very detailed to be dealt with here in this plan. The SLMPU should follow the SAR procedures from the IMO Search and Rescue Manual, the MERSAR and any other applicable maritime SAR manuals as well as information and concepts from the SAR training they have had.

The following actions have to be taken:

- Determination of search areas.
- Search techniques
- Conduct of the search
- Rescue of survivors
- Emergency assistance

They are thoroughly described in the above-mentioned manuals.

Part III. Saint Lucia SAR Resources and Situation.

13.- Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC)

The Search and Rescue Conferences held in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1984 and in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1994 made France responsible for a maritime search and rescue region, in the western Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean sea, in Which Saint Lucia is geographically located.

The MRCC is located in Fort-de-France, Martinique (MRCC Fort de France) and a Rescue Co-ordination Sub-centre is located at Cayenne, French Guyana.

The MRCC is under the authority of the Prefect of Martinique, delegate of the French Government for the state action at sea.

In Annex 1 of this plan, a map of the MRCC can be found.

14.- Agreement between France and Saint Lucia on Maritime Search and Rescue.

The Government for France and the Government of Saint Lucia signed an Agreement for the co-ordination of joint search and rescue activities within the MRCC

Under this Agreement, the SLMPU agreed to:

- Operate a permanent telephone watch for SAR
- Is to be regarded as an alerting post, in charge of relaying to the MRCC distress alerts received in Saint Lucia
- Activate Saint Lucia facilities when requested by the MRCC, except if they can be directly activated by the MRCC when at sea.
- Act as relay between the MRCC and all Saint Lucia authorities during SAR operations.
- Activate Saint Lucia facilities for a SAR case situated in the Saint Lucia territorial waters and inform the MRCC.

The MRCC shall take control of SAR operations in the event of one of the following situations arises:

- If it is impossible to link up with SLMPU

- In situations where operations require facilities other than Saint Lucia facilities or where special difficulties arise

- If otherwise so requested by SLMPU

The MRCC shall give notice as soon as possible to SLMPU of any SAR operations which are expected to be conducted or to reach the territorial sea of Saint Lucia.

The MRCC shall send a written report to SLMPU about any SAR operations conducted in the territorial sea of Saint Lucia, as soon as possible after completion of said operations.

The MRCC may require intervention of the Saint Lucia facilities for SAR operations into and out of the Saint Lucia territorial sea.

For purpose of SAR operations only, facilities of one of the parties participating in a SAR operation shall have free access into and a right of over flight over the territorial sea and internal waters of the other party.

Facilities of one of the Parties participating in a SAR operation shall be allowed to call in harbour or an aerodrome of the other Party, as far as this call is practicable. The MRCC and the SLMPU will facilitate the formalities these calls involve.

In any SAR operation expenses incurred by public facilities and by private vessels legally bound to provide assistance shall be sustained by the operator (public agency, ship owner or other) of the facility.

The Head of the Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit and the Head of the MRCC shall decide by common consent the practical arrangements for day-to-day operational relations between SLMPU and the MRCC. They shall exchange documents and information which are useful for an efficient co-operation and they shall meet at least once a year.

Finally, the Agreement mentions that according to particular ad-hoc arrangements, French public agencies may provide assistance to Saint Lucia authorities or agencies in SAR matters and particularly to SLMPU for SAR training and personnel, and, as far as practicable, visits of MRCC and SLMPU personnel shall be exchanged.

15.- Organisation and Resources

The Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit has 48 personnel and they are part of the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force. They have a 24-hour watch system and they monitor through channels 16 and 79 VHF and channel 2182 HF. They have telephones and fax machine. The SLMPU has an Operations Room on the base in Castries and the sub base in Vieux – Fort that works 24 hours a day. The OPS room has communication systems and charts. Although the SLMPU personnel are trained in Maritime SAR and they respond to distress call often and they have specific procedures for Maritime SAR and general Operations Orders.

The SLMPU has telephone communications although it does not have a specific SAR hotline for the detection of ships in distress or aircraft accidents at sea.

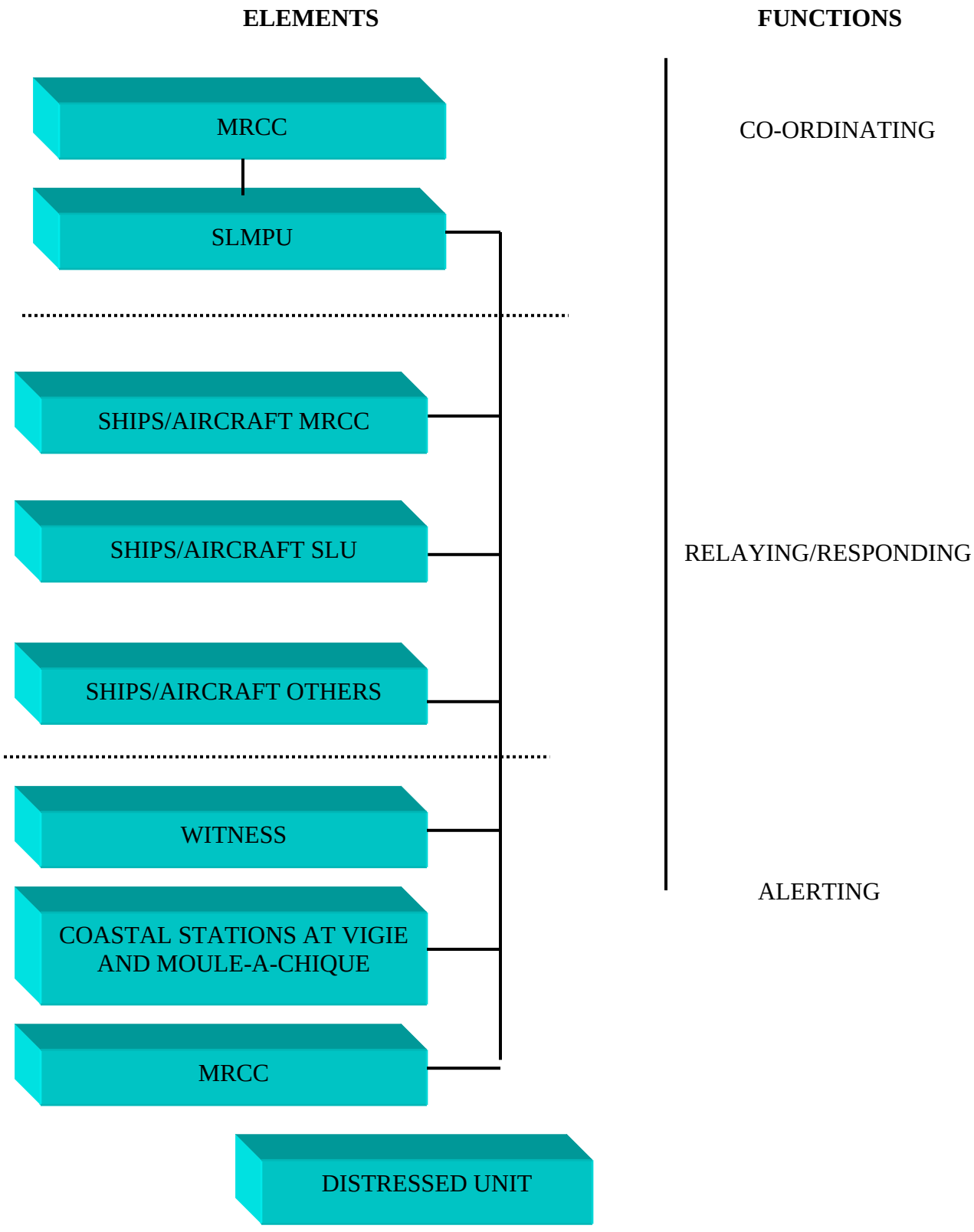
The Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit has 8 vessels as follows:

In Castries:

82 feet Patrol Boat
65 feet Patrol Boat
30 feet RHIB
27 feet Mako
22 feet Pirogue
22-foot Guardian Boston Whaler

In Vieux Fort:

40 feet Sea Ark
7 meter RHIB



Organisation of the SAR Response in Saint Lucia.

16.- Response to Distress Calls

Immediately after receiving a distress call in the OPS Room the Chief Supervisor is informed by the OPS personnel. At the same time the MRCC (Martinique Regional Co-ordination Centre) is contacted. Communications between the SLMPU and the MRCC are made in French Creole and English.
The time for response is 15 minutes from the receipt of the distress call to the commencement of the deployment of SAR vessels. A shorter time is needed for small vessels.

Once the distress call is received at the OPS Room, and after informing the Chief Supervisor, a process of obtaining information from the ship in distress starts. Specific formats (Saint Lucia Search and Rescue/ Overdue vessel fact sheet) are filled out with information such as name of vessel, vessel registration, vessel call sign, nature of distress, last known position, date, time, country of registration, vessel characteristics such as colour, hull, deck, bottom; fuel on board, etc. This information is given to the Chief Supervisor to be given to the SAR vessels.

However, it should be noted that the format (Saint Lucia Search and Rescue / Overdue vessel fact sheet) have the relevant information about the number of passengers and their condition (if injured and the nature of the injury whether serious or not , threatened, etc.)

The decision to deploy a SAR vessel is based on the position of the vessel in distress, and the particular characteristics of the situation of distress itself rather than on the flag of the vessel or in which territorial waters the ship is in. This is, always after informing the MRCC, decision is taken about who is going to deploy resources and where based on the nature of distress and the location of the vessel in distress. Normally, the if the position of the ship in distress is closer to Martinique or to Saint Lucia is what determines the deployment of SAR vessels from either country. Of course, there can be critical situations in which both countries would have to deploy SAR resources.

The decision to use aircrafts in the SAR activities is also taken depending on the nature of distress and the situation of the vessel in distress. Assistance from the US Coast Guard and from the Dutch islands could also be requested and provided.

The SLMPU SAR operations are intended to save life mainly; however, in the case of assistance to ships without life endangered, the SLMPU charges fees for towing, engineering, engine and diving depending also on the length of the vessel.

The SLMPU has two (2) trained Emergency Medical Technicians. As part of the SLMPU standard operating procedure they would informs the Fire Service that they are bringing injured person ashore and they require the assistance of an Ambulance. The Fire Service would respond with an ambulance and wait at the dock to take the injured person or persons to the hospital.

The SLMPU responds to a mean of 16 times per year.

There is the need to expand the SAR capacity through other resources in Saint Lucia such as private firms groups like Captain Mike and Saint Lucia helicopters.

17.- Funding and Assistance from other Countries.

The Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit gets military assistance from the US Military in terms of training and funds. The US Coast Guard, the US Navy and the US Department of Defence provide assistance to the SLMPU.

The SLMPU relies on funds both local and from foreign governments/agencies for fuel, maintenance and other expenses. Now a days assistance from the US military depends on the ratification of the International Court of Justice. If Saint Lucia ratifies, the assistance from the US military would be suspended.

18.- Training.

Training has been conducted in navigation, response to emergencies, Maritime Law Enforcement, logistics and SAR.

IMO also provides a two-week SAR training course.

The Commander of the SLMPU expressed the need for additional training in SAR techniques first aid and medical attention for the injured.

19.- Coast Stations and Communications.

Saint Lucia has two coastal stations that would relay distress calls to the SLMPU: the Vigie signal station and the Moule-a-Chique signal station.

The Vigie station is a twenty-four hour manned stationed owned and operated by the Saint Lucia Air and Ports Authority.

The Vigie station has continuous watch on Channel 16 VHF (156.8 MHz) and 2182 kHz

The Moule-a-Chique station is also a twenty-four hour manned station owned and operated by SLASPA. This Station also has continuous watch on Channel 16 VHF (156.8 MHz) and 2182 kHz.

Vigie and Moule-a-Chique signal stations are the only existing coast stations in Saint Lucia. These stations, although in operation, are very inefficient because of the fully manual operation of the services they provide. Another point to note is the limited geographical coverage of the VHF radios, which are used at these stations.

Elements of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) are yet to be established in Saint Lucia.

National and international shipping cannot communicate with land-based subscribers or with each other countries through Saint Lucia's land based network via the signal stations.

Without modern communication facilities it is very difficult to organise preventive action against pollution and to implement countermeasures in the event of maritime ecological accidents.

Saint Lucia cannot cover all its waters due to blind spots. Saint Lucia does not have the GMDSS yet. Actually, it is being developed and funded by the French Government.

One problem faced by the SLMPU is the one with lost fishermen boats that don't have communications equipment and normally are reported lost several hours or days after they are lost.

Both Vigie and Moule-a-Chique stations receive distress and safety calls and relay them to the Coast Guard (SLMPU) in Vigie. Additionally, A dedicated transceiver on 165 MHz provides direct communication between Vigie station and the George F.L. Charles Airport. The system provides for the control of vessel and airline traffic in the vicinity of the harbour entrance.

According to the Maritime Communication's Report for the National Master Plan for the Maritime Radio Communications Sector in Saint Lucia (See Bibliography at the end of this plan), these two (Vigie and Moule-a-Chique), the only signal stations in Saint Lucia, are inadequate owing to the fully manual operation of the services they provide and the limited coverage.

The Report adds that the VHF coverage of the existing stations of the SLMPU have a limited range due to their geographical locations (Seaports of Castries and Vieux Fort); the Seaports of Castries and Vieux Fort receive VHF coverage via the Vigie and Moule-a-Chique signal stations respectively; the Port of Soufrière, on the other hand, is outside the VHF coverage of the existing signal station. National and international shipping cannot communicate with land based telephone subscribers or with other countries through Saint Lucia's land-based network via the signal stations.

The so-called VHF French Extension Project will provide Saint Lucia with equipment resources and training to install and operate GMDSS to ensure that VHF coverage is provided for all waters around Saint Lucia. This system will allow the MRCC to communicate directly with vessels in distress when in Saint Lucian waters.

20.- French VHF Extension Project.

The French VHF Extension Project can be summarised as follows:

Installation of VHF equipment at the Coast Guard Base, for A1 coverage from Vigie, Castries and Moule-a-Chic in Vieux Fort.

The stations will be equipped with VHF transceivers; channel 70 (for DSC).

Such a VHF installation will cover the waters around Saint Lucia up to a distance of around 30 to 50 nautical miles. Once it has been implemented, Saint Lucia will be in a position to declare a GMDSS Sea Area A1 zone.

The budget to implement the proposed development plan is estimated in approximately EC $ 246,500.00 (US $ 91,296.29). This budget comprises equipment, spare parts and services related to installation and staff training. The implementation time is two years.

21.- Recommendations.

Recommendations to optimise the work of the SLMPU regarding maritime SAR are the following:
1.- Training

Assess SAR training needs and design a SAR training programme for the SLMPU personnel. The SLMPU should base their training on their needs and not only on available training courses. Once SAR training needs are assessed and a SAR training programme has been designed it can be submitted to regional and international organisations for support.

2.- Medical Attention.

Ensure that the SLMPU has the capacity to provide medical attention to the injured from search and rescue activities until they final medical attention in the hospital as needed. The SLMPU should meet with the MOH and with the Fire Service to address this situation.

3.- Expand Capacity.

The SLMPU must expand its SAR capacity with other national resources from the government or from the private and social sectors such as Captain Mike, Saint Lucia Helicopters and other organisations. For these purposes, the SLMPU should seek assistance from the Ministry of Tourism.

4.- Fishing boats.

The SLMPU and the Department of fisheries should analyse and find a solution for the lack of communications from the fishing boats in order to optimise SAR activities involving fishing boats.

5.- Simulation Exercises.

Personnel, training, plans, procedures and equipment must be tested regularly through simulation exercises. The SLMPU should design a simulation exercise programme for these purposes. Involvement of other organisations that would be involved in a real event is necessary.

6.- Revision of Formats.

Formats for the record of information of distress calls should be revised and redesigned as soon as possible including information about number of injured. This has to be done by the SLMPU taking into consideration past experiences, considering how it is done by other SAR organisations (MRCC, etc) and considering international regulations (IMO SAR Manual, MERSAR, others).

7.- Co-ordination with MRCC.

SLMU and MRCC must meet at least once a year. The SLMPU should prepare an agenda regarding common issues and problems that have to be addressed by both Parties.

8.- VHF French Extension Project.

This project is vital for the best operation of the SAR activities of the SLMPU. Without a good communication system it is not possible to detect and respond to all distress calls. This project must continue. The SLMPU and the SLASPA must continue these efforts along with the assistance of the French Government.

9.- Funding by the US Military.

The SLMPU should have a position on the need of US military assistance for SAR purposes. The SLMPU should then make recommendations to the Saint Lucian Government to be considered when ratifying or not the Convention for the International Court of Justice. However, the SMLPU should consider at the same time other sources of support and funding based on a SLMPU real needs assessment.

10.-Plan and Procedures.

This plan and its emergency procedures must be revised and updated at least once a year by the SLMPU to improve response in the case of distress calls.

Part IV. Emergency Procedures.

22.- Emergency Procedures.

There will be three emergency procedures for this plan:

MSAR- 001. Notification of Alert
MSAR- 100. Maritime Search and Rescue.
MSAR- 200. General Co-ordination.

They are described in the following pages.

Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan.

Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan.

Emergency Procedure MSAR.- Notification of Alert.

Version

Version 0. October 20th, 2003.

Objectives:

To activate the response mechanism to deploy SAR resources to give response to a distress call.

Responsible for the Procedure:

Operator of Communications at the Operations Room in the SLMPU.

Steps of the Procedure.

The Operator of Communications at the Operations room in the SLMPU shall:

Permanent steps.

1.- Ensure that the OPS room works adequately and it has its resources in good working conditions.

2.- Report to the Chief Supervisor any deficiency detected in the OPS room.

3.- Keep in god shape maps, charts, documents and communications equipment in the OPS room.

4.- Revise communications procedures and formats regarding maritime SAR regularly.

5.- Keep at hand a directory with the phone numbers of:

- MRCC.
- Coast Stations Vigie and Moule-a-Chique.
- Director NEMO.
- SLASPA.
- G.F. Charles Airport.
- Hewanorra Airport.
- Chief Police.
- Fire Chief'.
- Chief Medical Officer.

- A&E Hospitals.
- Red Cross
- Ministry of Tourism
- Embassies

And any other organisation, governmental, private and/or social involved in Search and Rescue operations.

6.- Update plans, procedures and directories regularly.

7.- Revise and make suggestions to the Chief Supervisor for the update of the Saint Lucia Search and Rescue/ Overdue Vessel Fact Sheet.

8.- Participate in training activities regarding maritime SAR.

9.- Participate in simulation exercises to test resources, equipment and plans and procedures regarding maritime SAR.

10.- Revise and make suggestions for the update of the Saint Lucia Search and Rescue/ Overdue Vessel Fact Sheet after every simulation exercise and after every real event.

<u>When arriving at the OPS Room.</u>

11.- Be briefed by the Operator from the previous shift.

12.- Check equipment and other resources at the OPS room.

13.- Ensure that all resources needed in the OPS room like communications, procedures, maps, charts, formats, manuals, etc. are available and in good conditions for maritime SAR in the case of a distress call.

14.- Run net radio checks with coast stations at Vigie signal station and Moule-a-Chique signal station, with the MRCC and with any other organisation with the frequency determined by the SLMPU.

15.- Be ready at all times to respond in the case of a distress call.

16.- At the change of shift, brief the next Operator.

<u>When a distress call is received.</u>

17.- Receive/request information about:

- Name of Vessel
- Vessel call sign
- Nature of distress

- Position
- Date
- Time
- Sea conditions
- Number of passengers

18.- Inform the Supervisor on Duty of the SLMPU immediately.

19.- Inform the MRCC immediately via radio and call at the 596 596 709 292

20.- Keep in contact with the distress vessel or with whomsoever sent the distress call (coast stations, witness) to gather more information about:

- Vessel data
- Position
- Emergency equipment on board
- Passengers, characteristics and status
- Any other as stated in the Saint Lucia Search and Rescue /Overdue Vessel Fact Sheet.

21.- Keep in contact with the witness, distress vessel, coast stations and SAR vessel (s) till the termination of the operations or until the distress messages are cancelled.

22.- Keep a log with information of all calls received, date, time situation reported, actions taken and results.

23.- Plot on charts the position of the distressed vessel.

24.- Alert and maintain contact with others organisations involved in the attention of the emergency as required such as Fire Service for ambulance transportation, Hospitals for medical attention or others.

25.- At the end of the distress situation, prepare a report and send it to the Chief Supervisor.

26.- Participate in the revision of this procedure after the event.

END OF PROCEDURE.

Attachments:

1.- Directory of Organisations involved in Maritime SAR. (Not attached).

2.- Saint Lucia Search and Rescue/ Overdue Vessel Fact Sheet. (Not shown).

Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan.

Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan.

Emergency Procedure MSAR.- Maritime Search and Rescue.

Version

Version 0. October 20th, 2003.

Objectives:

To search and rescue vessels and passengers in the case of distress.

Responsible for the Procedure:

Captain of the SAR vessel. (Supervisor on Duty).

Steps of the Procedure.

The Supervisor on Duty shall:

Permanent.

1.- Maintain the SAR vessel (s) in good shape and in the possibility to be deployed 15 minutes after being notified of a distress call.

2.- Ensure that the SAR personnel and ship crew are in the possibility to be deployed 15 minutes after being notified of a distress call.

3.- Ensure that SAR equipment and materials (medical, rations, signalling, covering, fire and lightning gear on board or at the base in good conditions and immediately available in the case of an alert call that demands the deployment of SAR vessel (s).

4.- Ensure that the SAR personnel is trained in maritime SAR

5.- Ensure that communication and navigation equipment on board is in excellent working conditions to be used immediately in the case of the notification that a vessel is in distress.

6.- Identify training needs for the SLMPU involved in maritime SAR and ensure that training is provided to the personnel on a regular basis.

7.- Know and ensure that the SLMPU involved in maritime SAR know IMO SAR manual, MERSAR manual, this plan, its emergency procedures and any other applicable

maritime SAR manuals to be used for the case of planning and conducting maritime SRA operations.

8.- Be trained and ensure that the crew on board is trained in maritime search and rescue techniques.

9.- Plan and participate in simulation exercises to test personnel, material resources and planning.

10,- Revise this procedure and update it at least once a year and every time after a simulation exercise and after a real event.

When a distress call is received.

11.- Be notified that the SMLPU in agreement with the MRCC has determined that SLMPU SAR vessels will participate in a maritime SAR operation due to a distress call.

12.- Receive/request information about the ship or craft in distress:

- Name of Vessel
- Vessel call sign
- Nature of distress
- Position
- Date
- Time
- Sea conditions

13.- Initiate action in accordance with the detailed plans or instructions for the conduct of a SAR operation in the area.

14.- Assess the situation and determine the type and number of SAR vessels that will be deployed.

15.- Consult with the Coast Guard Commander, when needed and depending on the distress situation, about the deployment of SAR vessels

16.- Inform SAR personnel that have to be onboard that a SAR operation has started.

17.- Ensure that the SAR vessel is ready to be deployed within 15 minutes after the distress cal was notified.

18.- Ensure that the SAR boat crew is ready and equipment for communications and search and rescue is on board and in good shape and/or working conditions.

19.- When applicable, notify the owner or agent, if possible, and keep him informed of developments.

20.- From the information available, prepare a general plan for the conduct of operations.

21.- Request assistance which might be available from ships, craft or services not included in the SAR service.

22.- Determine the probable position of the object of search, the probable margin of error in this position and the search area.

23.- Make arrangements for the separation for safety purposes of units engaged in the search.

24.- Designate appropriate search patterns for the units participating in the search and assign search areas to unit or groups of units.

25.- Rescue passengers in from the ship or craft in distress using rescue techniques and provide them with basic medical attention as needed.

26.- Maintain a detailed record of the operation, including on-scene arrival and departure times of SAR units and other vessels and aircraft engaged in the operation, areas searched, track spacing used, sightings and leads reported, actions taken and results obtained.

27.- Always make reports for the Coast Guard Base at Vigie and the MRCC. These reports should include but not be limited to, weather and sea conditions, the results of search to date, actions taken and results obtained.

28.- Report the number and names of survivors to base and to the RCC, providing the names and designations of units with survivors aboard, report which survivors are in each unit and requesting additional assistance from the centre when necessary, for example, medical evacuation of seriously injured survivors.

29.- When applicable, inform the ship or craft in distress, if possible, of action taken.

30.- Ensure consular authorities concerned are notified.

31.- Ensure accident investigation authorities are notified as appropriate.

32.-Return to HQ and prepare a final report of the operations.

33.- Revise and update plans and procedures.

34.- When applicable, refurbish all equipment and materials used in the SAR operations so the SAR vessel can be used again in other SAR operations as soon as possible.

END OF PROCEDURE.
Attachments. (None).

Saint Lucia National Emergency Management Plan.

Saint Lucia Maritime Search and Rescue Plan.

Emergency Procedure MSAR.- General Co-ordination

Version

Version 0. October 20th, 2003.

Objectives:

To establish, operate and maintain in Saint Lucia an adequate and effective search and rescue service regarding safety on and over the sea and, when circumstances so require, by way of mutual regional arrangements co-operate with neighbouring States for this purpose.

Responsible for the Procedure:

Commander of the Saint Lucia Marine Police Unit.

Steps of the Procedure.

The Commander of the SLMPU shall:

Permanent.

1.- Co-ordinate all the maritime SAR activities of the SLMPU.

2.- Ensure that the SMLU has an Operations Rom equipped with adequate communications equipment and necessary information for the receipt, relay and notification of distress calls.

3.- Ensure that the SLMPU has adequate and enough trained personnel to conduct maritime SAR operations.

4.- Ensure that the SLMPU has adequate and enough vessels and equipment to conduct promptly and efficiently maritime SAR operations.

5.- Ensure that the SLMPU has adequate and updated plans and procedures for the conduction of maritime SAR operations.

6.- Co-ordinate with the NEMO, Fire Service, Ministry of Health, Department of Fisheries and with any other governmental organisation involved in emergency response

and disaster management for the improvement of planning and optimisation of resources in the case of the need of maritime SAR operations.

7.- Ensure the SLMPU identifies its own training needs and prepares a maritime SAR training programme.

8.- Co-ordinate the organisation, planning, execution and evaluation of simulation exercises regarding maritime SAR operations.

9.- Co-ordinate with private organisations and volunteers for the provision of maritime SAR resources in the case of ships in distress in Saint Lucian seas.

10.- Co-ordinate with other Marine Units from other countries for common activities regarding SAR operations or for co-operation, funding and training purposes.

11.- Co-ordinate with the Martinique MRCC for the better use of resources and the improvement of communication and operations procedures for maritime SAR operations in the MRCC region.

11.- Meet with the MRCC at least once a year to decide by common consent the practical arrangements for day-to-day operational relations between SLMPU and MRCC.

12.- In coordination with SLASPA and other organisations involves, make recommendations for the signature, ratification and/or access of international Conventions that impact on maritime SAR activities in Saint Lucia.

<u>When a distress call is received.</u>

13.- Be informed of the magnitude of the danger of the vessel (s) in distress.

14.- When the situation demands it, be consulted on the decision of what resources deploy for the maritime SAR activities.

15.- Be informed at all times about the situation of the ship in distress, the SAR operations executed and results obtained.

16.- Establish contact, if necessary, with the MRCC for the co-ordination of maritime SAR activities.

17.- Be informed of the results of the SAR activities.

18.- Be briefed by the Operations Room Operator and by the Captain of the SAR vessel after SAR operations are terminated.

19.- Receive a final report from the Operations Room and from the Captain of the vessel (s) deployed for the SAR operations once they have finished.

20.- Revise and update the SAR Plan and its Emergency Procedures every time after a real event occurs.

END OF PROCEDURE.

Attachments.

(None).

Part V.- Bibliography and Annex.

23.- Bibliography.

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ST. LUCIA SEARCH AND RESCUE/OVERDUE VESSEL FACT SHEET

Police Marine Unit
PHONE #: 1 758 456 3870/ FAX: 1 758 452 2261
EMERGENCY PHONE # 999
EMAIL: pmu@rslpf.com

VHF CHANNEL 16 & 79 HF 2182 KHZ

NAME OF VESSEL	VESSEL REGISTRATION	VESSEL CALL SIGN

NATURE OF DISTRESS: -

LAST KNOWN POSITION	DATE	TIME	REPORTED BY	DATE	TIME

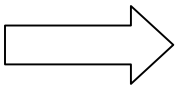
CONTACT NUMBER	METHOD REPORTED BY	PERSON RECEIVING	MOVEMENT DIARY #

INFORMATION RELIABILITY	SEA/WEATHER CONDITIONS: -

VESSEL DATA

COUNTRY OF REGISTRATION	HOME PORT	OWNER/CAPT OF VESSEL	NO. OF P O B'S

VESSEL TYPE	HULL CONSTRUCT	WEIGHT	LENGTH	BEAM	DRAFT	ANY INJURES / NATURE	
							SERIOUS NOT SERIOUS

VESSEL COLORS	HULL	DECK	INTERIOR	CABIN / BIMINI	SAILS
					

BOTTOM	WATERLINE	STRIPES	SUPERSTRUCTURE

TYPE OF ENGINE	CONDITION	FUEL ON BOARD	VESSEL LEFT FROM	DATE

ETD	DESTINATION	DATE	ETA	VESSEL INTENTIONS	INTENDED AREA

VESSEL DISPATCH	DATE	TIME	CREW	SEARCH ENDED

REASON FOR TERMINATION OF SEARCH: -

DISTRESS VESSEL EQUIPMENT	VHF	HF	EPIRB	COMPASS	RADAR	SATNAV	GPS	FLARES	CHARTS

NO. OF L/JACKETS	D/PUMP	FIRE AXE	TORCH LIGHTS	LIFERAFT	OTHER

DINGHY COLOUR	OTHER INFORMATION: -

FOOD/WATER SUPPLY FOR (DAYS)	S.O. I/C SHIFT	PERSON TAKING REPORT