



Safety recommendation no. 517

Date of the publication	26.10.2016
Safety deficit	<p>The provision of search and rescue (SAR) services with their multi-layered and complex processes inevitably requires the collaboration of various specialists. These can often be found in existing organisations that specialise in providing certain services, which however inevitably leads to interfaces. Therefore, FOCA as the supervisory authority of the SAR and the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) as the coordination centre of an SAR mission have a critical task to complete: they must organise the interfaces appropriately and already be maintaining constant communication in preparation for a mission so that, in the event of an emergency, the required organisations and their expertise can be relied on immediately and without any friction.</p> <p>Although regular meetings take place in particular between the main participants (FOCA, the RCC and the Air Force), institutionalised meetings or even practical exercises involving all interface partners have so far not been scheduled. For more complex cases, it would be conceivable to work in an interdisciplinary team at a common location. This would enable direct communication, permanent interaction and critical enquiries and would therefore lead to a fruitful collaboration between the different organisations. Working in parallel and in a structured way is of paramount importance for the RCC. It is doubtful whether the capacity of just one employee is sufficient in every case to make all the necessary clarifications simultaneously and on time. It is also difficult for an individual person to possess the competence required in all areas of aviation. This raises the question of whether a form of organisation should be aimed for in the RCC which allows other trained staff to be purposefully involved in a mission when necessary. As the study showed, valuable time can be lost by working in a sequential rather than a parallel manner.</p>
Safety recommendation	The Federal Office of Civil Aviation (FOCA), together with the rescue coordination centre (RCC), should assess and, if necessary, adapt the organisation and operation of the RCC.
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Stage of the implementation	Implemented. In 2014 and 2015, FOCA and REGA recognised together that the organisation and operation of the former RCC could no longer meet the needs and demands of the future. FOCA could not finance large-scale expansion of the RCC. On 1st January 2016, the mandate for the RCC was therefore transferred from the air rescue service to the cantonal police force in Zurich. In the process, one operations centre was made redundant, amongst other things, and compared to the previous solution, three dispatchers are now available per shift instead of one. A process for using the Flarm data was created and the Skyguide radar data is also systematically requested and evaluated. In the future, FOCA aims to hold regular

meetings with the main participants to exchange information. The service agreement between the Air Force and the FOCA on the provision of services by the Air Force as a Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) for civilian aviation under ICAO, Annex 12 was signed on 4 February 2020 and entered into force, as planned, on 1 January 2021. The main changes included the cancellation of the interface between alerts and carrying out search measures, and the management of the SAR service operations by a single organisation in the future. The related legislation (OUSRSO, 748.126.11) and the publications (AIP) were updated.