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IAMSAR Manual Updates and Onboard Carriage Requirements

Applicable to: This FLEET SAFETY LETTER should be brought to the attention of ship-owners, ship managers, operators, Masters of Vanuatu-registered ships and Recognized Organizations

This Fleet Safety Letter is issued to highlight the latest amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual and to emphasize the importance of maintaining required onboard publications in their current editions. Ships are to maintain an up-to-date hard copy of IAMSAR Manual Volume III.

The IMO Maritime Safety Committee has promulgated amendments to **the IAMSAR Manual by MSC.1/Circ.1686**, with an application date of **01 January 2026**. The update includes revisions reflected across the manual and, among other matters, aligns guidance with SOLAS GMDSS modernization developments.

The amendment package introduces additional supporting material within the manual, including sample arrangements and procedures relevant to SAR administration and coordination. These additions include an example memorandum of understanding between **SAR services and accident investigation authorities (Appendix P - Volume I)**; an example process intended to facilitate expeditious approval for entry of assisting State **SAR units into the RCC State's territory (Appendix Q - Volume I)**, and new material addressing **night search by aircraft using electro-optic/infrared (EO/IR) equipment and/or night vision devices (NVDs)(Appendix W – Volume II)**.

Further operational guidance is also introduced to strengthen planning and coordination for night search tasks including operational guidance for the use of **EO/IR systems** and **NVDs**, together with new content addressing SAR considerations in the vicinity of offshore wind and renewable energy installations as per **Section 6.15 - Volume II**.

The amended text additionally reflects expanded guidance on the use of flight tracking systems and related applications as an aid to situational awareness and search planning, as applicable.

Ship-owners, ship managers, operators and Masters are requested to review their onboard publication arrangements and ensure that applicable IAMSAR volumes are updated in line with the above effective date, and that relevant personnel are made aware of the update.

For additional information or to submit proposals, please contact: Office of the Maritime Administrator at info@register-vu.com.


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