



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
DIRECTORATE OF AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT
RAJIV GANDHI BHAWAN, NEW DELHI-110003
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ATMC

AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CIRCULAR NO. 05 of 2026

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING SEARCH AND RESCUE EXERCISES (SAREX)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Search and Rescue Exercises (SAREX) test and improve operational plans, provide a learning experience and improve liaison and coordination skills. Such exercises, conducted realistically, help demonstrate and assess the true effectiveness of training and the operational efficiency and competence of the SAR service. Exercises will reveal deficiencies that may exist in SAR plans and enable them to be improved. It is safer to have shortcomings revealed by exercises rather than during actual operations.
- 1.2 Each search and rescue organisation should periodically take part in coordinated search and rescue exercises. These SAREXs should be designed to exercise the SAR system, in whole or in part, and to test such things as operational plans, communication procedures and facilities, individual staff performance, SAR unit performance, and inter-organisation and/or international operations. and analysed.



1.3 SAREX should be conducted at three levels:

- a. Communication Exercise (COMM): COMM consists of periodic use of all means of communications between all potential users to ensure capability for actual emergencies.
- b. Coordination Exercise (COORD): COORD involves a simulated response to a crisis based on a series of scenarios. All levels of the SAR service are involved, but resources are not deployed. This type of exercise requires considerable planning but is usually executed in one day.
- c. Full-scale SAR Exercise (FULL): In FULL, actual SAR facilities are deployed. This increases the scope of the SAR system testing. Full-scale exercise includes all the agencies that are likely to be involved in an actual SAR incident by replicating a pre-planned aircraft accident, and the response of each unit involved is recorded and analysed.

1.4 A permanent record of the exercise is necessary to disseminate valuable information and to maintain a historic file for later case studies, analyses and system improvements.

2 Purpose

This ATMC highlights the requirement of conducting search and rescue exercises (SAREX) in accordance with the recommendations of DGCA CAR, IAMSAR Manual, NASAR Manual, AAI Corporate SAR Manual, AAI SAR Training Policy and other relevant documents, as amended from time to time.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This ATMC applies to SAR Coordinators, RCC-in-Charges, RCC/RSC Coordinators and ATM personnel engaged in tasks associated with search and rescue coordination in RCCs and RSC established at Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Guwahati Airports.



4 Procedures

- 4.1 SAR Exercises, viz. COMM, COORD and FULL SAR exercises should be conducted by RCCs located at Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai and RSC located at Guwahati, in rotation, as per the schedule contained in Annexure-1.
- 4.2 The detailed procedures for conducting SAR Exercises are contained in the following documents:
- a. DGCA CAR SECTION 9, SERIES-S, PART I (Section 4.4)
 - b. IAMSAR Manual Volume I (Section 3.3)
 - c. NASAR Manual (Section 8.5)
 - d. AAI Corporate SAR Manual (Section 7.3)
 - e. AAI SAR Training Policy (Section 7.3.3)
- 4.3 Utmost care should be taken to ensure that the exercise scenarios adequately simulate realistic SAR conditions, especially the 'search' phase.
- 4.4 It should be ensured that the personnel entrusted with the planning of search and rescue exercises, especially full-scale exercises, are NOT involved in responding to the simulated scenarios in any capacity. In other words, those personnel who plan exercises should not be involved in responding to the created scenarios. This avoids covering up known weaknesses to ensure ideal results, instead of revealing what would occur in an actual SAR situation.
- 4.5 The implementation of the concept of backup RCCs is in progress. Accordingly, the involvement of SAR Personnel from the concerned backup RCC during COMM, COORD and FULL SAREX would be beneficial. This would help strengthen communication, coordination and familiarisation between the Main RCC/RSC and the Backup RCC.
- 4.6 SAREX reports should, among other details, comprehensively capture the exercise conduct and outcomes, including the conditions or circumstances



under which the exercise was terminated.

- 4.7 Deficiencies, observations, and lessons identified during the search and rescue exercises should be comprehensively analysed, and timely corrective action should be taken. The annual internal audit of RCCs and RSCs should check the progress of the actions taken.

5 Queries:

- 5.1 Any queries or further guidance required on the contents of this ATMC should be addressed to:

**Executive Director [ASM]
Airports Authority of India
Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan,
Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi-110003.
E-mail: edasm@aai.aero**

6 Validity:

This ATMC shall remain in force until further notice.

7 Cancellation:

ED (ATM) Letter No. AAI/ATM/SAR/18-20 dated 28 January 2020 on SAREX Schedule and its Annexures (including revised Annexure I) may be treated as cancelled.


(MOOSA T F)

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR [ASM]
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA**

Dated: 10-08-2026

मूसा टी एफ / MOOSA T F
कार्यवाहक निदेशक (एटीएम ए.एस.एम) / Executive Director (ATM-ASM)
भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण / Airports Authority of India
राजीव गांधी भवन / Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan
सफ़दरजुंग हवाई अड्डा / Safdarjung Airport
नई दिल्ली-110003 / New Delhi-110003

Annexures: Annexure-1 (SAREX Schedule 2026-2031)

ANNEXURE-1 TO ATMC 05/2026

SCHEDULE OF SAR EXERCISES: 2026-2031

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
RCC/RSC	YEAR (FY)	APR-JUN	JUL-SEP	OCT-DEC	JAN-MAR
CHENNAI	2026-2027	COMM	COMM	COMM	COORD
DELHI		COMM	COMM	COMM	FULL
KOLKATA		COMM	COMM	COORD	COMM
MUMBAI		COORD	COMM	COMM	COMM
GUWAHATI		COMM	COORD	COMM	COMM
CHENNAI	2027-2028	COMM	COMM	COORD	COMM
DELHI		COMM	COMM	COMM	COORD
KOLKATA		COMM	COORD	COMM	COMM
MUMBAI		COMM	COMM	COMM	FULL
GUWAHATI		COORD	COMM	COMM	COMM
CHENNAI	2028-2029	COMM	COORD	COMM	COMM
DELHI		COMM	COMM	COORD	COMM
KOLKATA		COORD	COMM	COMM	COMM
MUMBAI		COMM	COMM	COMM	COORD
GUWAHATI		COMM	COMM	COMM	FULL
CHENNAI	2029-2030	COORD	COMM	COMM	COMM
DELHI		COMM	COORD	COMM	COMM
KOLKATA		COMM	COMM	COMM	FULL
MUMBAI		COMM	COMM	COORD	COMM
GUWAHATI		COMM	COMM	COMM	COORD
CHENNAI	2030-2031	COMM	COMM	COMM	FULL
DELHI		COORD	COMM	COMM	COMM
KOLKATA		COMM	COMM	COMM	COORD
MUMBAI		COMM	COORD	COMM	COMM
GUWAHATI		COMM	COMM	COORD	COMM