Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 299

Adopted 29 May 2018

**Regulations Regarding Maritime Search and Rescue in the Area of Responsibility of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in the Case of a Maritime or Aviation Accident**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 46, Paragraph two of the Maritime Administration and Marine Safety Law*

**I. General Provisions**

1. The Regulation prescribes:

1.1. the procedures by which the Naval Forces Unit of the National Armed Forces which carry out the coast guard functions (hereinafter – the Coast Guard) and other authorities shall cooperate in search and rescue activities in the cases of maritime or aviation accidents in the area of responsibility of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (hereinafter – the Coordination Centre (MRCC));

1.2. the operation of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and its sub-centres;

1.3. the area of responsibility for search and rescue of the Republic of Latvia (Annex 1).

2. Terms used in the Regulation:

2.1. area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) – the aquatorium of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga in the area of responsibility for search and rescue of the Republic of Latvia;

2.2. emergency action plan of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) (hereinafter – the emergency action plan) – a detailed set of measures in order to ensure search and rescue in the cases of maritime and aviation accidents, and also the operation of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and its cooperation with other authorities in the area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC);

2.3. MRCC Committee – a meeting of the responsible representatives of State authorities which may be convened for decision-making and exchange of information during large-scale search and rescue operations.

3. The Coordination Centre (MRCC) in cooperation with the authorities referred to in Paragraph 17 of this Regulation shall lead and coordinate search and rescue operations in the area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) in accordance with this Regulation and the emergency action plan.

4. The Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Health shall enter into an interdepartmental agreement regarding the emergency action plan.

5. The emergency action plan shall conform to the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (1979). The emergency action plan shall include the information referred to in Annex 2 to this Regulation as well as other information required for the performance of search and rescue operations.

6. The Coordination Centre (MRCC) in cooperation with the authorities referred to in Paragraph 17 of this Regulation shall initiate the updating of the data included in the emergency action plan.

7. If the responsible State authorities of the Republic of Latvia believe that an aircraft which has entered the air space of the Republic of Latvia and is engaged in a search and rescue operation is required to undergo a State border crossing, customs, immigration, and other control procedures, these shall be performed at the landing site of the aircraft engaged in a search and rescue operation.

8. When performing State border crossing, customs, immigration, and other control procedures, the responsible State authorities shall not take any measures that impede the emergency operation of search and rescue units or specific technical aids in the area of responsibility for search and rescue of the Republic of Latvia.

**II. Coordination Centre (MRCC)**

9. The Coordination Centre (MRCC) shall operate continuously for 24 hours a day, and its operation shall be ensured by the Coast Guard.

10. The responsible official of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and its sub-centres shall engage the authorities included in the emergency action plan and the indicated specific technical aids available at their disposal in a search and rescue operation.

11. The decision on the termination of a search and rescue operation in the area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) shall be taken by the responsible official of the Coordination Centre (MRCC).

12. If an emergency has occurred in the area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC), the Coordination Centre (MRCC) has the right to:

12.1. engage the standby search and rescue aircraft of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – the SAR aircraft) in the search and rescue operation, notifying the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) thereof without delay. The SAR aircraft and crew must be ready to fly in up to 40 minutes during working hours and in up to one hour and 30 minutes at other times from the moment the Coordination Centre (MRCC) has first contacted them;

12.2. engage foreign search and rescue units, ships and aircraft of the Republic of Latvia or foreign countries, which can provide emergency assistance in a search and rescue operation, in the search and rescue operation. The Coordination Centre (MRCC) shall, without delay, notify the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) of engaging an aircraft;

12.3. permit foreign ships and warships to enter and stay in the territorial waters of the Republic of Latvia, but aircraft and military aircraft to enter the air space of the Republic of Latvia above the territorial waters in order to participate in the search and rescue operation. The Coordination Centre (MRCC) shall, without delay, notify the officials of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the State Border Guard specified in the emergency action plan of granting such permit.

13. In the cases specified in Sub-paragraphs 12.1 and 12.2 of this Regulation, if required, air space shall be created in conformity with the agreement on cooperation concluded between the Coordination Centre (MRCC), the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC), and *valsts akciju sabiedrība “Latvijas gaisa satiksme”* [State joint stock company Latvian Air Traffic] and approved by *valsts aģentūra “Civilās aviācijas aģentūra”* [State agency Civil Aviation Agency].

14. The Coast Guard shall, within 10 working days from the day of coming into force of this Regulation and henceforth within five working days from the day of occurrence of changes, publish information in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis* and on the website of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) (www.mrcc.lv) on the operational means of communication as well as the following:

14.1. address;

14.2. telephone number;

14.3. fax number;

14.4. e-mail address;

14.5. international maritime satellite communication system (INMARSAT‒C) number;

14.6. radio communication call signs, ranges, frequencies, and channels.

15. Any person who has information on an emergency in the area of responsibility of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) at his or her disposal has an obligation report it to the Coordination Centre (MRCC) by dialling 115, using the unified emergency telephone number 112, or to the police by dialling 110.

**III. Cooperation between the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and Other Authorities**

16. The procedures for the use of the air space required for search and rescue operations in the area of responsibility for search and rescue of the Republic of Latvia shall be determined by the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) in accordance with actual circumstances and this Regulation.

17. During search and rescue operations, the Coordination Centre (MRCC) shall cooperate with the following authorities according to their competence:

17.1. units of the National Armed Forces;

17.2. the State Fire and Rescue Service;

17.3. the State Police, the municipal police, and the port police;

17.4. the State Border Guard (including the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC));

17.5. the State agency Civil Aviation Agency;

17.6. *valsts akciju sabiedrība “Latvijas Jūras administrācija”* [State joint stock company Maritime Administration of Latvia];

17.7. the State Emergency Medical Service;

17.8. port services;

17.9. other authorities of the Republic of Latvia and foreign countries and third parties if required.

18. The authorities indicated in the emergency action plan with which the emergency action plan has been coordinated have an obligation, without delay, to engage in the search and rescue operation according to the order of the official of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and to provide assistance to the persons experiencing the emergency.

19. Legal and natural persons engaged in the search and rescue operation shall act under the leadership of the officials of the Coordination Centre (MRCC).

20. If the performance of a large-scale search and rescue operation requires the engagement of additional resources which are not at the disposal of the Coordination Centre (MRCC), the MRCC Committee may be convened. The MRCC Committee shall act in accordance with the by-laws of the MRCC Committee which are an integral part of the emergency action plan.

21. The work of the MRCC Committee shall be led by an official appointed by the commander of the National Armed Forces. The MRCC Committee shall consist of the representatives of the authorities referred to in Sub-paragraphs 17.1, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 17.5, 17.6, and 17.7 of this Regulation. The MRCC Committee may invite the representatives of the authorities referred to in Sub-paragraphs 17.8 and 17.9 of this Regulation for participation in meetings.

**IV. Meeting for Coordination of the Operation of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC)**

22. If necessary, a meeting shall be convened for coordination of the operation of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC). The meeting shall be led by the State Secretary of the Ministry of Transport.

23. Representatives of the Coordination Centre (MRCC) and the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC) shall participate in the meeting. If necessary, representatives from the following authorities shall be invited to the meeting:

23.1. the Ministry of Transport;

23.2. the Ministry of Defence;

23.3. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

23.4. the Ministry of the Interior;

23.5. the Ministry of Health;

23.6. the State agency Civil Aviation Agency;

23.7. the State Emergency Medical Service;

23.8. port authorities;

23.9. the State joint stock company Maritime Administration of Latvia.

24. The meeting shall be convened upon proposal of the Coordination Centre (MRCC), the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC), or any authority referred to in Sub-paragraph 23.1, 23.2, 23.3, 23.4, 23.5, 23.6, 23.7, 23.8, or 23.9 of this Regulation. The authority proposing the meeting shall submit proposals and information to the State Secretary of the Ministry of Transport on the issues to be included in the agenda of the meeting.

25. Representatives from State and local government authorities not referred to in Paragraph 23 of this Regulation as well as private individuals may be invited to the meeting.

26. The competence of the participants in the meeting:

26.1. agreement on the proposals to be submitted to the Cabinet regarding the sources of funding for covering losses that occurred during a search and rescue operation;

26.2. taking of decisions, preparation of opinions and recommendations regarding the issues which cannot be decided separately by the Coordination Centre (MRCC), the Aeronautical Rescue Coordination Centre (ARCC), or another authority engaged in the search and rescue operation according to their competence;

26.3. solving of issues in accordance with the requirements and recommendations of international organisations and international agreements related to the development and organisation of aviation and maritime search and rescue services, and also submission of corresponding recommendations to the responsible ministries.

Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis

Minister for Defence Raimonds Bergmanis

**Annex 1**

Cabinet Regulation No. 299

29 May 2018

**Area of responsibility for search and rescue of the Republic of Latvia**



582448N 0203834E – 580700N 0212900E – 575342N 0213648E –

575124N 0213848E – 574712N 0214300E – 574547N 0215034E –

574458N 0215458E – 574645N 0220836E – 574930N 0221644E –

575539N 0223501E – 575627N 0224227E – 574650N 0225428E –

574208N 0225957E – 573511N 0231051E – 573538N 0232422E –

574011N 0233456E – 574658N 0233855E – 575357N 0233604E –

575357N 0241234E – 575502N 0241540E – 575228N 0242123E –

Along the Latvian/Estonian State border to 575112N 0255552E –

Along the Latvian/Estonian State border to 573103N 0272105E –

Along the Latvian/Russian State border to 564506N 0275406E –

Along the Latvian/Russian State border to 562843N 0280833E –

Along the Latvian/Russian State border to 561024N 0280848E –

Along the Latvian/Byelorussian State border to 554050N 0263750E –

Along the Latvian/Lithuanian State border to 555908N 0255651E –

Along the Latvian/Lithuanian State border to 562208N 0243749E –

Along the Latvian/Lithuanian State border to 562217N 0234520E –

Along the Latvian/Lithuanian State border to 562216N 0231222E –

Along the Latvian/Lithuanian State border to 560426N 0210537E –

560409N 0210352E – 560402N 0204452E – 560400N 0204000E –

560846N 0200456E – 561752N 0185354E – 562043N 0183023E –

565217N 0193400E – 570000N 0195000E – 571800N 0200000E –

581816N 0203443E – 582448N 0203834E UNL/GND

Minister for Defence Raimonds Bergmanis

**Annex 2**

Cabinet Regulation No. 299

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**Information to be Indicated in the Emergency Action Plan**

1. By-laws of the MRCC Committee.

2. Information on authorities participating in search and rescue operations.

3. Actions of the authorities referred to in Paragraph 2 of this Annex, their operational centres and command posts in all types of emergencies.

4. Information on officials to be contacted if a maritime or aviation emergency has occurred, their telephone numbers, and the means of communication available to them.

5. Directions regarding the provision, operational maintenance, fuelling location, technical provision, and characteristics of the ships, aircraft, and other vehicles engaged in search and rescue operations, and also their permanent location.

6. Detailed description of the measures to be taken by the units engaged in search and rescue operations in the area of their responsibility. The description shall include the following information:

6.1. the type of search and rescue operation;

6.2. the use of communication systems and equipment;

6.3. the measures to be taken in cooperation with other coordination centres or sub-centres;

6.4. the methods to be used to give warnings to ships and aircraft;

6.5. the duties and authority of the personnel assigned to the search and rescue operation;

6.6. the possible regrouping of equipment due to meteorological conditions or other circumstances;

6.7. the ways of receiving current information for search and rescue (for example, announcements for mariners, weather forecasts, state of sea);

6.8. the ways of receiving assistance from other coordination centres or sub-centres (including ship, aircraft, personnel, and equipment);

6.9. support to be provided to search and rescue ships or other ships that come into contact with a ship experiencing an emergency;

6.10. the methods to be used for providing assistance to an aircraft in distress and the crew of which is forced to land on a surface ship or water.

Minister for Defence Raimonds Bergmanis