

## Operations

### ASSISTANCE TO AIRCRAFT IN DISTRESS

This regulation is intended to provide direction to subordinate units who may be tasked to assist aircraft in distress or provide emergency navigational assistance within the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) system. It applies to Headquarters NORAD, regions, sectors, and commanders of other units under the operational control of the Commander in Chief (CINC), NORAD. Other commands and agencies having air defense responsibilities to CINCNORAD will use this regulation for guidance. NORAD region commanders are authorized to supplement this regulation to establish specific responsibilities and operating procedures for their areas.

#### SUMMARY OF CHANGES

Updates operations/reporting procedures and distribution list.

#### 1. Responsibilities:

**1.1. NORAD Region Commanders.** Ensure operations personnel of all command and control facilities monitor emergency radio frequencies, radar beacons, and distress patterns to the maximum extent possible.

**1.2. NORAD Regions.** Ensure the Senior Director (SD) at the ROCC/SOCC applies these procedures when a call or emergency transponder "squawk" (identification friend or foe (IFF)) transmission is received from an aircraft in distress or in need of emergency navigational assistance.

**1.3. Region operations Control Center/Sector operations Control Center (ROCC/SOCC).** ROCC/SOCC Senior Directors immediately assess the need to assume direct supervisory control over air defense assistance until a successful recovery is complete or the emergency no longer exists. When another agency is providing assistance, the SD monitors the situation and will not attempt to intervene until the emergency is terminated. The SD should consider these factors in making the proper assignment:

1.3.1. The nature of the emergency.

1.3.2. Position of aircraft if known.

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1.3.3. Locations of suitable airports or air bases with emergency facilities.

1.3.4. Fuel status of search aircraft.

1.3.5. Current and forecast weather conditions throughout the operational area.

1.3.6. The ROCC/SOCC SD ensures the following actions are taken:

1.3.6.1. The recovery airport or air base is notified of the type of emergency and pertinent recovery information, even if the recovery base is located in another facility's area of responsibility.

1.3.6.2. Proper FAA Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) and Transport Canada (TC) centers are provided with required emergency information to ensure flight safety.

1.3.6.3. The proper search and rescue (SAR) unit is notified at once.

1.3.6.4. Navigational aid is available. If radio communication is established with the distressed aircraft, ensures all information concerning position and distance from the recovery facility, runway length, condition of navigational facilities, and any other information relating to a safe recovery is provided.

1.3.6.5. All operational messages for SAR activities are relayed over the tactical network. The appropriate region is notified at once of any NORAD alert aircraft in distress. The region then notifies the NORAD Air Defense Operations Center (ADOC). An update call is made when the emergency has ended. Required information is transmitted when MINIMIZE is in effect.

1.3.6.6. All air and ground frequencies, transmissions, and instructions issued or received over point-to-point communication are monitored and recorded.

**Note:** The surveillance section takes the "record track" switch action on the track(s) of concern any time a distress situation of any type is known or suspected to be in the unit's area of responsibility. Retains Joint Surveillance System (JSS) media covering the period of a distress situation at least 30 days or until released by competent authority.

1.3.6.7. Adjacent units are notified, giving the type of emergency, position of aircraft, and radio frequency if assistance is required. .

1.3.6.8. Fighter aircraft are scrambled or diverted if necessary. If refueling support is required, initiates actions to request launch. **Note:** The CONROCC requests tanker support through HQ Air Mobility Command (AMC).

1.3.6.9. Alerted agencies are notified when emergency has ended.

1.3.6.10. A mission-ready (MR) weapons director assists and or monitors the emergency in progress.

**1.4. Reports.** For NORAD Operational Control (OPCON) forces only, forward reports submitted under the provisions of AFR 127-41 Investigating and Reporting US Air Force Mishaps, to HQ NORAD/J30,, Canadian NORAD Region follows guidelines established in Fighter Group Order (FGO) 6.00/4.

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