



# RCMSAR

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

# GUIDE



**ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE  
SEARCH & RESCUE**  
*Saving Lives on the Water*

## Introduction

Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue's (RCMSAR) primary function is to support the Canadian Coast Guard's federal marine search and rescue mandate. For all matters related to requesting support for federal marine search and rescue activities, the Victoria Joint Rescue Coordination Center is the tasking authority for RCMSAR assets. One of RCMSAR's secondary functions is to be prepared to support local government and provincially mandated response agencies in support of their respective emergency jurisdictions on a request for assistance basis.

This guide is intended to support community and provincial agencies in requesting assistance from RCMSAR. The authority to request RCMSAR assistance is based on the October 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Memorandum of Understanding between Emergency Management BC and RCMSAR (attached).

While EMBC is deemed the appropriate coordination agency for this support, it is understood that the support will be directed to authorized requesting agencies at the emergency site level. Annex A (Requesting Agency Matrix) provides further detail about these requesting agencies and applicable authorized activities and exclusions. Authorized activities are summarized as follows:

- (a) Inland waters Search and Rescue (SAR) and Ground SAR mutual aid;
- (b) On-water command, control and communications platforms;
- (c) On-water transportation assistance for EMBC approved responders and representatives to access incident or response locations;
- (d) On-water transportation assistance for personnel under the care of EMBC approved responders (e.g. BC Ambulance Service with patients under care);
- (e) On-water observation and reporting of emergency incidents and incident impacts to support situational understanding;
- (f) On-water safety patrols and emergency first aid;
- (g) On-water recovery of human remains; and
- (h) Personnel augmentation support to provincial, local governments and related community agencies (e.g. emergency social services, emergency operations centers, etc.).

British Columbia may request assistance from RCMSAR in accordance with the activities identified above and at Annex A to the MOU. This MOU only applies to requests for assistance defined in Annex B (Request for Assistance Procedure). To ensure responsiveness to priority marine Search and Rescue tasks, RCMSAR stations are limited to provide support under the auspices of this MOU within 10 nautical miles of their home base location. Any support activities not described herein or requests exceeding this geographical limit must be approved on a case by case basis by the Representatives.

Requests may be verbal or in writing (including electronic means). If verbal, the request must be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable. Requests should provide the following information:

- (a) a description of the emergency for which assistance is requested, the type of assistance required and an estimate of the expected duration that the assistance will be required;
- (b) a description of the amount and type of any additional equipment and supplies needed;
- (c) the administrative and logistical arrangements that will be put in place to support the operation (accommodations, feeding, medical, etc.);
- (d) the specific name and contact details of the on-scene commander to whom RCMSAR will be providing assistance; and
- (e) the specific place and time for staging and link up for the operation and a point of contact at that location.

## RCMSAR Station Asset and Equipment List

RCMSAR has 33 active SAR Stations and over 50 dedicated SAR vessels ready to deploy 24/7 to support EMBC Requests for Assistance. (See attached *“STATION CONTACT AND PAGING NUMBERS for a complete list of RCMSAR Stations*).

Every RCMSAR station **must** meet RCMSAR crewing standards before a vessel gets underway. The number of qualified crew changes based on vessel specifications, but all vessels, at the minimum, must have (1) qualified Coxswain and (1) qualified crewmember. All RCMSAR cabin vessels must have (1) qualified Coxswain, (1) qualified crewmember and (1) qualified new crewmember.

ALL qualified coxswains and crewmembers must have valid and current Pleasure Craft Operators Card (PCOC), Radio Operators Card – Maritime (ROC-M) and Standard First Aid Level “C” with AED (SFA-C).

Many RCMSAR Stations have members with higher levels of First Aid, but all must hold the minimum RCMSAR requirement.

In general, all Coxswains have, in addition to the qualifications mentioned above, Canadian Coast Guard RHIOT certifications and Transport Canada Small Vessel Operators Proficiency (SVOP), Marine Emergency Duties Level 3 (MED A3), RCMSAR Coxswain Leadership Level II and III

*or*

RCMSAR Coxswain Leadership Level I, Level II and Level III

RCMSAR’s dedicated SAR vessels are inspected annually by the RCMSAR Safety Audit Team and all meet the small vessel safety requirements by Transport Canada. In addition to those requirements, all SAR vessels have Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon’s (EPRIB).



All RCMSAR vessels **must** have specific SAR equipment on-board at-all-times while underway. Depending on the vessel type, a vessel may have additional equipment on-board.

### ***All vessels have:***





1. Standard First Aid kits with Oxygen (May have additional advanced First Aid equipment if members at the Station have higher level of training)
2. Spine Boards (many have, in addition to spine boards, Stokes Floating Baskets)
3. Automated External Defibrillator (AED)
4. Vessel towing capabilities
5. De-watering pump/fire suppressant hoses
6. Damage Control Kits
7. Search lights/spot lights
8. Radio Direction Finder (RDF)

9. Data Marker Buoy (DMB) – deployed in-water to track drift and speed
10. Towline
11. Radar
12. GPS Plotter with Automated Identification System (AIS)
13. VHF radios
14. Spare PFDs
15. Vessel safety equipment (i.e. flares, oars, bailing bucket, etc..)

### RCMSAR Vessel Types

<b>Type II FRC Specifications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33' LOA</li> <li>• Crew up to 6</li> <li>• 870 hp Diesel Jet Boat</li> <li>• Self Re-Righting Design</li> <li>• Cabin</li> <li>• 7m significant wave height</li> <li>• Up to and including Beaufort 10</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)</li> <li>• Davit crane for safer shoreside casualty extraction</li> <li>• BCAS secured stretcher capacity</li> <li>• Shock mitigating seats</li> <li>• Heat/Air Con control</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Type II FRC</b></p>
<b>Type 1 FRC Specifications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28' 4" LOA</li> <li>• Crew up to 5</li> <li>• Twin 250 hp Outboard Engines</li> <li>• Manual Re-Righting Device</li> <li>• Shock-mitigating crew console</li> <li>• 4m significant wave height</li> <li>• Up to and including Beaufort 8</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Type 1 FRC</b></p>



<b>Shuswap FRC Specifications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40' LOA</li> <li>• Diesel Jet Boat</li> <li>• Cabin</li> <li>• Crew up to 6</li> <li>• Max. 30 persons</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large forward survival cabin</li> <li>• Large working back deck</li> <li>• Heat/Air Con control</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Station 106 Shuswap FRC</b></p>
<b>Other FRC Specifications</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vessels ranging from 23' Zodiac Hurricane 733 to 25' Titan T-Top to 34' Titan 300 XL Cabin vessels.</li> <li>• Twin Outboard Engines</li> </ul>	<b>Additional Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	 <p><b>Titan 300 XL FRC</b></p>  <p><b>T-Top FRC</b></p>  <p><b>733 FRC</b></p>

## Station Asset Location and Information

Station Name	Location	Vessel(s)	Comments
Station 1 – West Vancouver	Horseshoe Bay	1. Type II 2. Type 1	
Station 2 – North Vancouver	Second Narrows Bridge	1. Type II 2. T-Top	
Station 4 - Squamish	Squamish	1. T-Top	
Station 5 – Crescent Beach	Crescent Beach Marina	1. Type 1 2. T-Top	Second vessel is shared with Station Delta
Station 8 – Delta	Point Roberts (USA)	1. Type 1	
Station 10 - Richmond	Fraser River (Middle Arm) & Steveston Harbour Authority	1. Titan 300XL Cabin 2. Titan Delta 5	Station has two locations. Middle Arm and South Arm on the Fraser River
Station 12 – Halfmoon Bay	Secret Cove & Porpoise Bay	1. Zodiac Delta 5 2. Zodiac 733	Station has two locations. Sechelt Inlet and Secret Cove north of Sechelt
Station 14 – Gibson's	Gibson's Landing Harbour Authority	1. Type 1	
Station 20 – Pender Island	Browning Harbour Marina	1. T-Top	
Station 25 – Salt Spring Island	Vesuvius	1. Titan 753	
Station 27 - Nanaimo	Brechin Boat Ramp	1. Type II 2. Titan 249 ICE2	
Station 29 – Ladysmith	Ladysmith Marina	1. Type 1	
Station 31 – Brentwood Bay	Anglers Anchorage Marina	1. T-Top	
Station 33 – Oak Bay	Oak Bay Marina	1. Titan Delta 5	
Station 34 – Mill Bay	Brentwood Collage	1. T-Top	
Station 35 – Victoria	Ogden Point	1. Type 1 1. T-top	
Station 36 – Sidney	Canoe Cove	2. Type 1	
Station 37 – Sooke	Sooke Harbour	1. Type II 1. Titan 850	
Station 38 – Ucluelet	Ucluelet Harbour	2. T-Top	
Station 39 – Port Alberni	Port Alberni	1. Type II	
Station 43 – Port Alice	Port Alice	1. Type 1	
Station 45 - Masset	Masset	1. Zodiac 753	
Station 50 – Port McNeill	Port McNeill	1. Type 1	

Station 59 – Deep Bay	Deep Bay / Bowser	1. Titan 249XL Cabin	Station also has owner operator vessel on Lasqueti Island
Station 60 – Comox	Comox	1. Type II 1. 733 Zodiac	
Station 61 – Pender Harbour	Madeira Park / Sunshine Coast	2. Titan 249XL Cabin	
Station 63 – Kitimat	Kitimat	1. Type II 1. Polaris Delta 3	
Station 64 – Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert	1. Type II 2. Zodiac 733	
Station 65 – Lax Kwa 'laams	Lax Kwa 'laams	2. Titan 249 XL Cabin	
Station 70 – Hartley Bay	Hartley Bay	1. Water Taxi (Owner Operator) 1. Water Taxi (Owner Operator)	
Station 74 – Gitxaala	Dolphin Island	2. Titan 249XL Cabin	
Station 106 – Shuswap	Sicamous	1. Type III 1. Lifetimer	
		2.	

British Columbia, Emergency Management BC – Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue

Memorandum of Understanding

Emergency Humanitarian Assistance

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective as of the 5<sup>th</sup> day of October 2017.

BETWEEN:

British Columbia Emergency Management BC (EMBC), Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province  
of British Columbia ("British Columbia")

-and-

The Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Incorporated ("RCMSAR")

(the Parties)

#### ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

The Parties enter this Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") to facilitate the provision of emergency assistance by RCMSAR to support the mandates and jurisdictions of British Columbia and its local governments and authorities.

The Parties recognize that emergencies may require specialized skills and resources to augment British Columbia's capabilities and to deliver resources to areas where those emergencies occur. As such, it is prudent to establish a relationship whereby RCMSAR may support British Columbia in a deliberate and effective manner.

This MOU establishes:

- (a) a framework for British Columbia to access the personnel and resources of RCMSAR to make prompt and effective responses to emergencies where British Columbia requests assistance;  
and
- (b) an agreement in principle to collaborate in emergency preparedness activities.

#### ARTICLE II – GOALS

The priority goals undertaken under this MOU are to:

- (a) provide for the safety and health of all responders;
- (b) save lives, prevent and limit injury and reduce suffering;
- (c) protect public health and property;

- (d) protect the environment;
- (e) Support British Columbia's emergency response needs effectively and efficiently.

### **ARTICLE III – AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES**

The Parties have identified the following as operational activities for which RCMSAR support might be requested. While EMBC is deemed the appropriate coordination agency for this support, it is understood that the support will be directed to authorized requesting agencies at the emergency site level. Annex A (Requesting Agency Matrix) provides further detail about these requesting agencies and applicable authorized activities and exclusions. Authorized activities are summarized as follows:

- (a) Inland waters Search and Rescue (SAR) and Ground SAR mutual aid;
- (b) On-water command, control and communications platforms;
- (c) On-water transportation assistance for EMBC approved responders and representatives to access incident or response locations;
- (d) On-water transportation assistance for personnel under the care of EMBC approved responders (e.g. BC Ambulance Service with patients under care);
- (e) On-water observation and reporting of emergency incidents and incident impacts to support situational understanding;
- (f) On-water safety patrols and emergency first aid;
- (g) On-water recovery of human remains; and
- (h) Personnel augmentation support to provincial, local governments and related community agencies (e.g. emergency social services, emergency operations centers, etc.).

### **ARTICLE IV - REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE**

British Columbia may request assistance from RCMSAR in accordance with the activities identified above and at Annex A. This MOU only applies to requests for assistance made between the Representatives designated herein or their delegates as defined in Annex B (Request for Assistance Procedure). To ensure responsiveness to priority marine Search and Rescue tasks, RCMSAR stations are limited to provide support under the auspices of this MOU within 10 nautical miles of their home base location. Any support activities not described herein or requests exceeding this geographical limit must be approved on a case by case basis by the Representatives.

Requests may be verbal or in writing (including electronic means). If verbal, the request must be confirmed in writing as soon as practicable. Requests should provide the following information:

- (a) a description of the emergency for which assistance is requested, the type of assistance required and an estimate of the expected duration that the assistance will be required;
- (b) a description of the amount and type of any additional equipment and supplies needed;



- (c) the administrative and logistical arrangements that will be put in place to support the operation (accommodations, feeding, medical, etc.);
- (d) the specific name and contact details of the on-scene commander to whom RCMSAR will be providing assistance; and
- (e) the specific place and time for staging and link up for the operation and a point of contact at that location.

British Columbia will inform RCMSAR when the assistance is no longer required. More refined and specific tasking authorities may be established under the auspices of this MOU.

#### **ARTICLE V – PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES**

The Parties agree to collaborate in preparedness activities such as joint training and exercises, public education initiatives and operational planning relevant to the context of this MOU. As these opportunities will vary according to cyclical plans, coordination will occur through an existing interagency forum or based on specific activity plans.

#### **ARTICLE VI – RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **1. Appointment of Representatives**

Each Party hereby designates an official as its Representative to carry out the duties of this MOU.

The Representatives are:

for British Columbia: Assistant Deputy Minister, Emergency Management BC

for RCMSAR: Chief Executive Officer, RCMSAR

##### **2. Duties**

Each Representative will:

- (a) ensure the programmatic activities necessary to achieve the intent of this MOU;
- (b) oversee the enactment of operational support as intended by this MOU;
- (c) conduct a joint annual review of this MOU to ensure its currency and validity; and
- (d) advise the other Representative should circumstances change that might render this MOU invalid or untenable.

### **3. On-Scene Operational Responsibilities**

RCMSAR personnel providing on-water assistance to British Columbia will remain under the command and control of their RCMSAR Coxswain, who is responsible for the safety of the RCMSAR crew and vessel, or other RCMSAR appointed representative for the duration of the provision of assistance.

RCMSAR personnel will provide assistance in compliance with the Incident Command System (ICS) structure as identified by the requesting agency.

All RCMSAR personnel will remain in compliance with all RCMSAR and superior regulatory authority regulations and policies while supporting British Columbia operations.

As in any emergency response organization, all RCMSAR members retain the right to refuse work that they deem to be unsafe to them or others or may cause them to act outside the bounds of RCMSAR policies and regulations or beyond the capabilities of their skills, expertise or equipment. RCMSAR personnel will not support operations whereby they may be affected by violent or criminal activity.

### **ARTICLE VII – TERMINATION**

Either Party may terminate this MOU given 90 days written notice to the other Party.

### **ARTICLE VIII – DISCRETION AND AUTHORITY NOT FETTERED**

Nothing in this MOU is intended to nor shall be interpreted to fetter the discretion or the authority of the Ministers or Legislature of British Columbia nor the Board of Governors of RCMSAR.

### **ARTICLE IX – INDEMNIFICATION**

RCMSAR members who, acting in good faith, support activities under the auspices of this MOU will be considered indemnified from civil action in accordance with Section 18 of the *BC Emergency Program Act* (1996), and the *BC Good Samaritan Act* (1996).

### **ARTICLE X – ACCIDENT AND LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Under separate contribution agreement, British Columbia will provide a proportionate allocation of funding to RCMSAR's insurance policies to support the activities described in this MOU. RCMSAR members will retain rights to access applicable workers' compensation benefits in accordance with British Columbia's laws, regulations and policies.



## ARTICLE XI – REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS

British Columbia will reimburse RCMSAR for operational costs related to the activities described in this MOU in accordance with prescribed EMBC policy rates unless otherwise agreed to by the Parties. Requesting agency reimbursement of costs to EMBC will be managed under separate agreement or existing inter-agency arrangements.


## ARTICLE XII – PLANS AND PROCEDURES

The Parties will collaboratively develop plans and procedures for the provision of RCMSAR personnel and resources to respond to emergencies. The following outline existing procedures or areas for the further development:


- (a) authorized requesting agencies and applicable authorized activities matrix (Annex A attached);
- (b) request for assistance procedure (Annex B attached) and station contact list (Annex C to be issued);
- (c) RCMSAR will ensure effective prioritization such that commitments to federal marine search and rescue operations remain unimpeded by this MOU (Annex B attached);
- (d) development of joint operational risk assessment protocols;
- (e) conduct of joint after-action activities to ensure learning and interagency improvement;
- (f) coordination of access to critical incident stress management resources;
- (g) collaboration with other agencies and levels of government to ensure unity of effort in response operations; and
- (h) development of interagency training plans to ensure interoperability and effectiveness in the execution of this MOU.

Duly signed and executed by:

For British Columbia:

  
Robert Turner  
ADM - EMBC

For RCMSAR:

  
Art Wootley, CEO

## Annex A -- Requesting Agency Matrix



ROYAL CANADIAN MARINE  
SEARCH & RESCUE



Emergency  
ManagementBC

Authorized Activity Requesting Agency	Inland Waters SAR & GSAR Mutual Aid	Command, Control & Comms. Platform	Personnel & Equipment Transport	Casualty Transport (Under Care)	Incident Observation & Reporting	Safety Patrols & First Aid	Water-based Recovery of Human Remains	Personnel Reinforcement
EMBC / Local Authorities	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Police of Jurisdiction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
GSAR Groups	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
BCEHS		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Fire Rescue		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
BC Wildfire Service		✓	✓		✓	✓		
BC Coroners Service		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Conservation Officer Service		✓	✓		✓	✓		

### \* Non- Authorized Activities

- Fire suppression
- Diving operations
- Hazardous materials exposure

Annex B -- RCMSAR Request for Assistance Procedure

