

CAD search and rescue exercise completed successfully

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) successfully completed a joint short-range search and rescue exercise (SAREX) today (November 29) at Port Shelter, Sai Kung.

Nine government departments and search and rescue (SAR) units participated in the exercise, which included the CAD, the Chinese People's Liberation Army Hong Kong Garrison (the Hong Kong Garrison), the Government Flying Service (GFS), the Hong Kong Police (HKP), the Fire Services Department (FSD), the Marine Department (MD), the Civil Aid Service, the Auxiliary Medical Service and the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO).

"The exercise is held regularly by the CAD to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination among the SAR units in SAR operations, so as to ensure a timely and effective response in an emergency. It also enhances training for air traffic controllers, aircrew and other related units likely to be involved to get them familiarised with SAR techniques," a spokesperson for the Department said.

The SAREX comprises two parts: a short-range exercise at Port Shelter, Sai Kung, today, and a long-range exercise tomorrow (November 30) at about 50 nautical miles east of Hong Kong in the South China Sea. For the long-range exercise tomorrow, participating units include departments of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, namely the CAD, the GFS, the HKO and the MD, as well as the Hong Kong Garrison, the Nanhai Rescue Bureau of the Ministry of Transport of the People's Republic of China, and the Guangdong Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre.

Today's exercise simulated a scenario of a helicopter crash at Port Shelter, Sai Kung. The Hong Kong Garrison, the GFS, the HKP and the FSD deployed their helicopters and vessels to assist in the rescue. Through the collaboration of all parties, all four people on board were rescued. The exercise was completed within one hour, with around 250 members from the participating SAR units mobilised.

"In accordance with Annex 12 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the CAD organises SAREX regularly to further strengthen its search and rescue capability as well as to enable SAR experts in the region to exchange views and share the latest technologies," the spokesperson said.