

Help that comes from the sky: CBMERJ helicopters on water rescue missions

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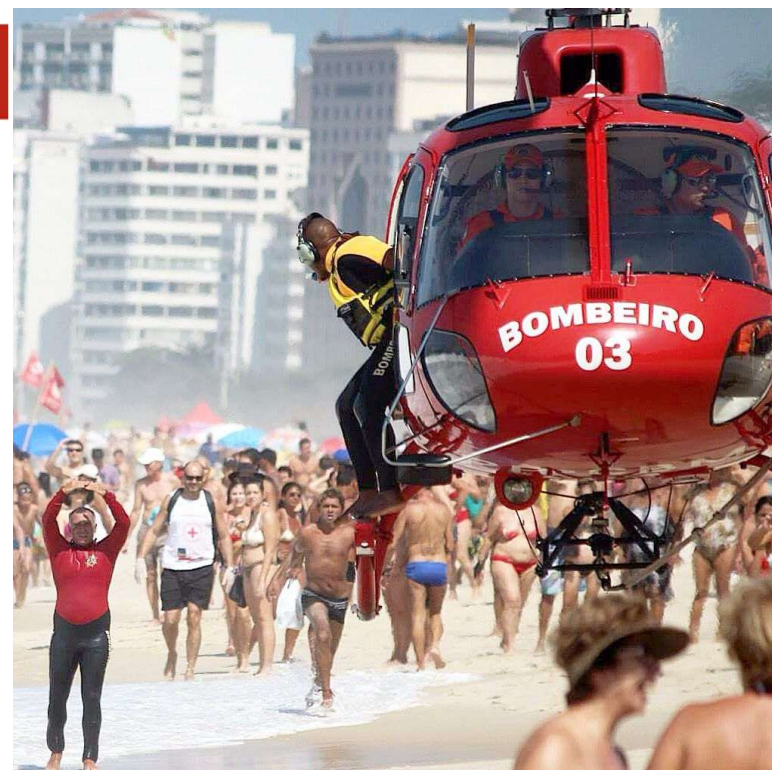
RIO DE JANEIRO

Em 2 dias de 2025, bombeiros do RJ fazem 1.285 resgates de afogados; número sobe 426% em 1 ano

Total de pessoas resgatadas nos 2 primeiros dias do ano é 5 vezes maior do que o registrado no mesmo período de 2024. Esse ano, só na Zona Sul do Rio foram 867 resgates.

Por Matheus Marques
04/01/2025 05h00 - Atual

In two days in 2025, Rio de Janeiro firefighters carried out 1,285 rescues at sea.



Photos: author

Introduction:

- According to the Military Fire Department of the State of Rio de Janeiro (CBMERJ), on January 1st alone, 1,138 ocean rescues were carried out throughout the state.
- This is the reality of a sunny holiday with hot weather and warm ocean water in Rio de Janeiro.
- On days like this, specialized resources such as jet skis, rescue boats, ambulances, drones and rescue helicopters are deployed to support lifeguards on the beaches.
- The Air Operations Department(GOA) provides this ocean rescue support.



Photos: author

Problem:

- However, there is limited detailed data on how these rescues are carried out and the support provided by rescue helicopters.

Objective:

- The aim of the study was to describe the data on ocean rescue operations by helicopters.

Method:

- A descriptive study divided into two stages: (1) data from flight records of GOA (January-1st-2015-to-December-31st-2023), considering exclusively water rescue missions (WRM), and (2) quantitative analysis of the data, presented in absolute and relative values.

Key-words:

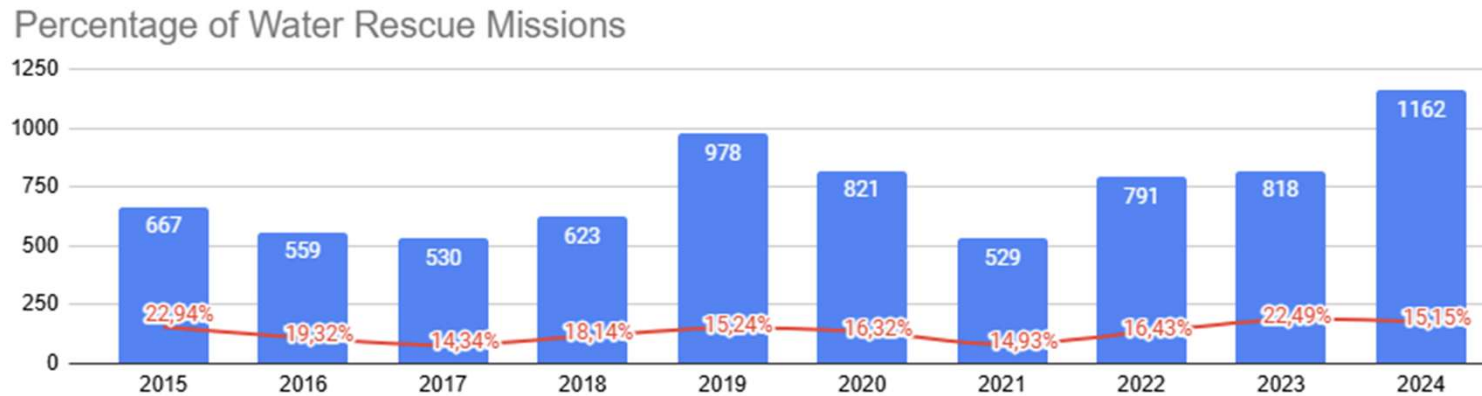
- Rescue, drowning, aviation.



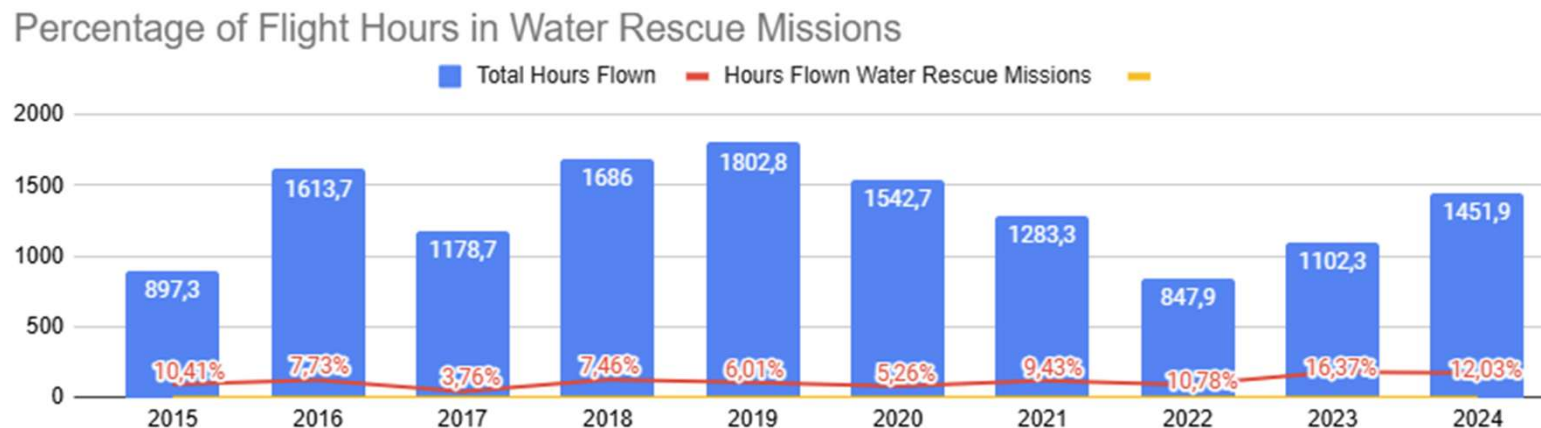
Photos: author

Result:

- The GOA helicopters carried out a total of 6,316 missions(TTM), of which 20.6%(1,302) were WRM, with an annual average of 748 and 130.



- The GOA flew 11,955 hours in TTM, with 9.6%(1,145h) allocated to WRM, resulting in an annual average of 1,341h and 115h.



Source: GOA/CBMERJ

Result:

- A total of 4,138 patients were assisted, with 27.2%(1,125) in WRM, averaging 455 and 113 annually.



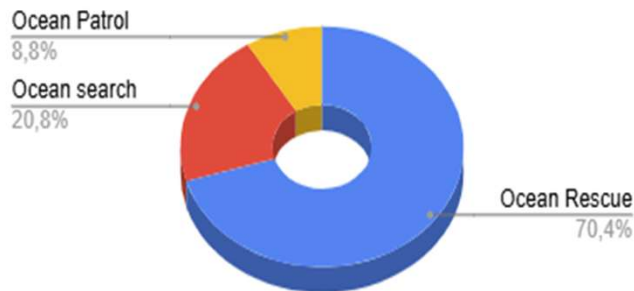
Source: GOA/CBMERJ

Photos: author

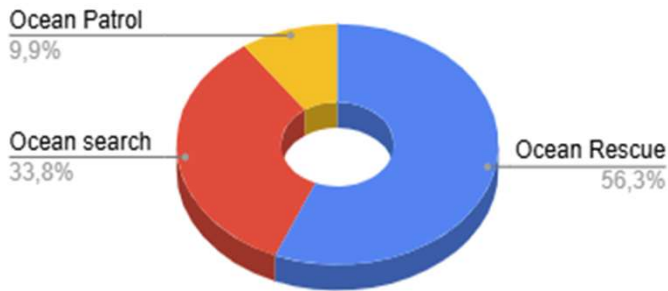
Result:

- From the group of WRM, 70.4%(916) were ocean rescue missions, accounting for 56.3%(645) of the flight hours, and 93.3%(1,050) of all victims were rescued.
- Ocean searches also accounted for 20.8%(271), with 33.8%(388) of the hours and 4.5%(51) of the patient rescued.
- Ocean patrols represented 8.8%(115), with 9.9%(113) of the hours and 2.1%(24) of the patient rescued.

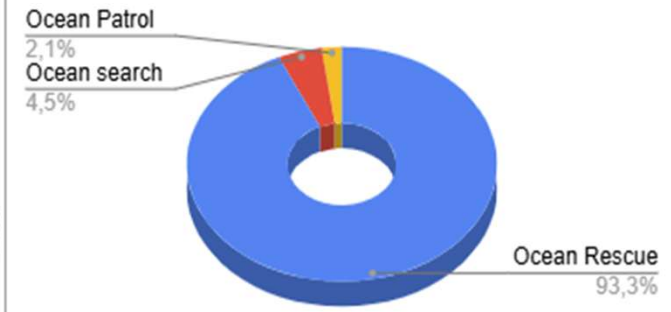
Water Rescue Missions - EVENTS



Water Rescue Missions - FLIGHT HOURS



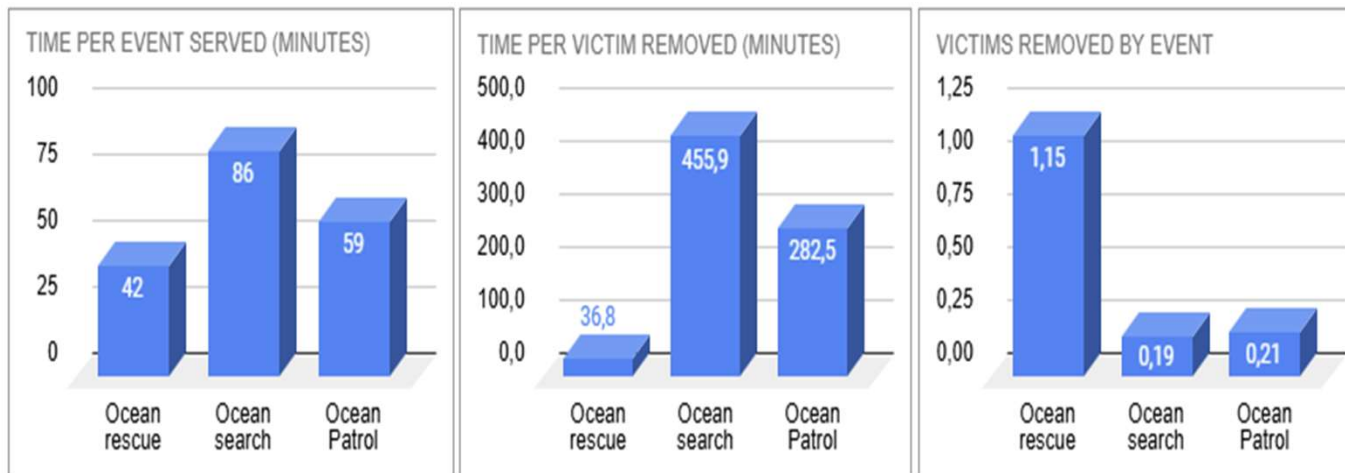
Water Rescue Missions - RESCUED VICTIMS



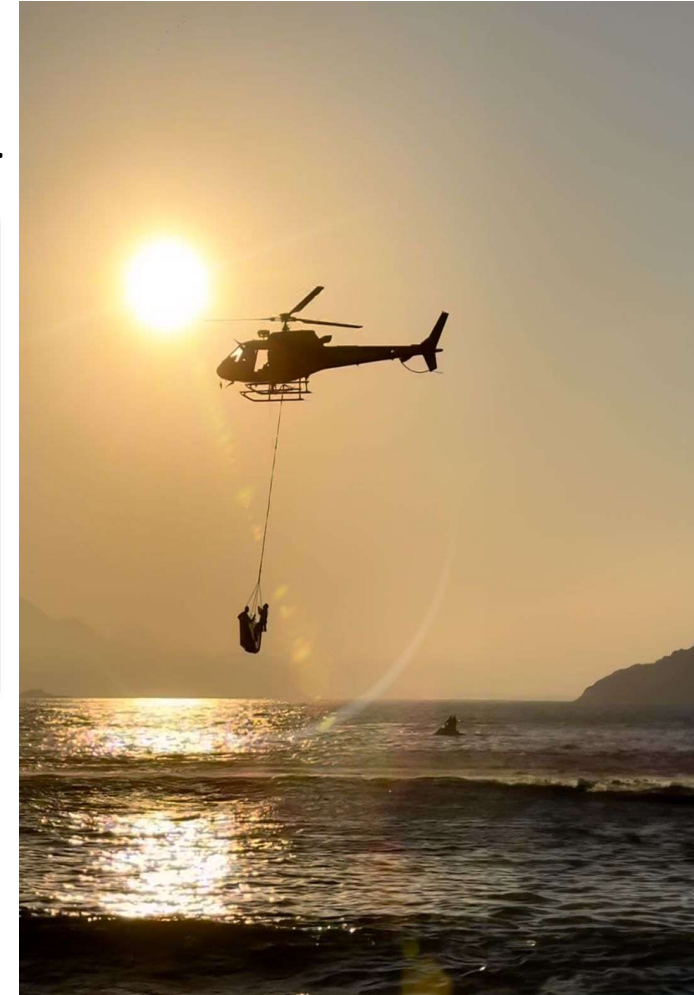
Source: GOA/CBMERJ

Result:

- The rescue rate was 0.86 patient per WRM and 0.98 per flight hour.



Source: GOA/CBMERJ



Photos: author

Conclusion:

- The study highlighted the importance of using helicopters to support rescues on beaches, demonstrating a high annual average and significant percentages dedicated to the protection and rescue of drowning patient.
- The impressive number of lives saved underscores the importance of this rescue resource. Future studies will expand knowledge on the use of water rescue aircraft, contributing to save more lives.



Reference:

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Photos: author

Fly and Hover, to Protect and to Save!