




Ground to Air Visual Signals

In an emergency, set off your distress beacon and wait for the search aircraft. Use the following set of international distress symbols to convey simple messages to an overflying search aircraft where there is no other means of communication. Make these symbols on the ground using rocks or other material large enough to be seen from the air.

Message	Code Symbol
Require Assistance	V
Require Medical Assistance	X
Proceeding in this Direction	
Yes	Y
No	N

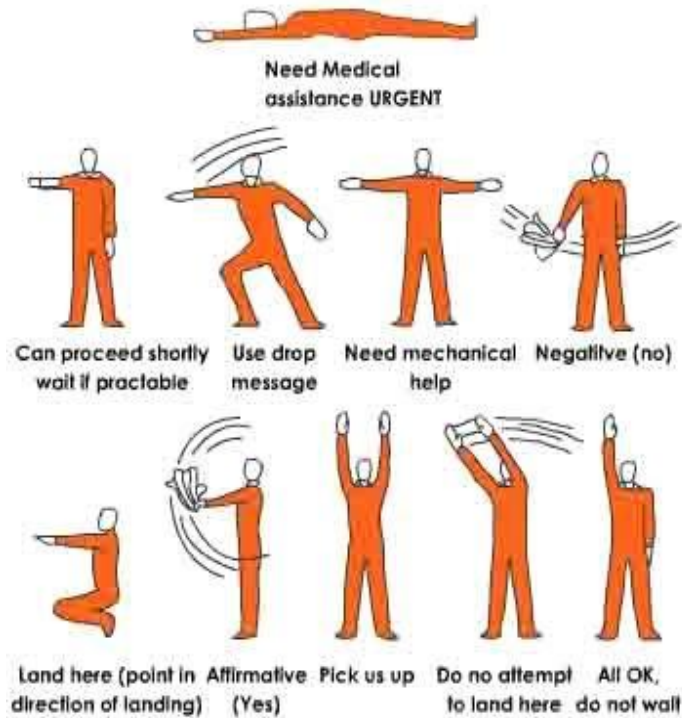
The above Ground-Air Visual Signal Codes conform with the ICAO and NATO standards and are also found in the Air Services Australia ERSA handbook found in most cockpits across Australia.













If in doubt use the International Symbol **SOS**. When preparing these signs try to make them 3m high and 30cm wide at minimum. If rocks and logs are not present dig the letters in so their own shadow creates the sign.

When using a light source (torch, car headlights etc) or CB (when voice comms are down) use Morse code:

Dot dot dot dash dash dash dot dot dot

Where dots equate to short pauses (1 sec) and dashes equate to long pauses (3 secs).



		
On land and at sea: O.K. to land. Arrow shows landing direction.	On land and at sea: Need medical attention.	On land and at sea: Do not attempt landing.
		
On land and at sea: Need first aid supplies.	On land and at sea: Plane is flyable; need tools.	On land: Need gas and oil; plane is flyable.
		
On land: Need warm clothing. At sea: Need exposure suit or clothing indicated.	On land: Indicate direction of nearest civilization. At sea: Indicate direction of rescue craft.	Have abandoned plane. On land: Walking in this direction. At sea: Drifting.
		
On land and at sea: Need food and water.	On land: Should we wait for rescue plane? At sea: Notify rescue agency of my position.	At sea: Need equipment as indicated. Signals follow.

In Australia the following signals by aircraft mean that the ground signals have been understood:

- During daylight – rocking of the aircraft’s wings.



Day or moonlight: Rocking from side to side.

- During darkness – flashing of the aircraft’s landing or navigational lights on or off twice.

Lack of the above signals indicates that the message has not been understood.

If the aircraft is a Search and Rescue aircraft, be aware of items being dropped from the aircraft such as satellite phones, food, water, etc.