

INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting 2016

Chairman's Summary
25-26 August 2016, Xi'an, China

Overview

95 participants from 21 countries and organizations working on urban search and rescue (USAR) gathered for the annual International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) Asia-Pacific (A-P) Regional Meeting in Xi'an, China, on 25 and 26 August, 2016. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex A**.

The meeting was held in Xi'an, China, hosted by China Earthquake Administration (CEA), the INSARAG A-P Regional Chair 2016, and co-organized by OCHA in its capacity as the INSARAG Secretariat that is located in the Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS) of the Emergency Services Branch (ESB) in OCHA Geneva.

Summary of presentations and discussions

Official Opening

Mr. Zhao Ming, Director General Department of Earthquake Disaster Emergency Management, CEA opened the annual INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting 2016 by welcoming the participants.

Mr. Hu Chunfeng, Director General, Department of International Cooperation, CEA welcomed the participants on behalf of China and the INSARAG Regional Chair 2016. He expressed his condolences to the people who lost their lives in the earthquakes in Italy and Myanmar, which occurred the day before the A-P Meeting. He highlighted the joint support for the INSARAG Exercise by the US and China in the last decade, and importance of this meeting as a space for the exchange of different views in international disaster response.

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes-Stampa, Deputy Head of ROAP, thanked the Regional Chair for hosting the Meeting, and gave his special thanks to New Zealand for supporting China as Vice-Chair and developing the capacity building strategy. He stated that the region had worked long and hard to improve their capacities, but disasters still overwhelm countries in the region, and there is a need for more coordinated response. He also congratulated the Malaysia's USAR Team, SMART, for their successful classification as the 46th IEC-classified team.

Mr. Hu Bin, Director General, CEA of Shaanxi province, welcomed the participants on behalf of Shaanxi province, which is one of the most historical places in China. He highlighted that Shaanxi was inflicted by major earthquakes in the history and improved the rescue capacity in the region. He stated that this meeting will be an important opportunity for promoting the regional cooperation and emergency response capacity in the A-P region.

Introduction of Participants and Adoption of the Agenda

Participants briefly introduced themselves. The meeting adopted the agenda unanimously (see **Annex B**).

INSARAG Asia-Pacific Key Events and Progress against the Workplan 2015-16

Mr. Yosuke Okita, the Asian regional focal point and the INSARAG Secretariat in OCHA's Field Coordination Support Section, provided the global updates on the INSARAG 2015-2016. Since the current INSARAG Strategy 2014-2017 need to be reviewed, Mr. Okita introduced the draft INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020 (**ANNEX C**) developed by the INSARAG Secretariat after consultations with the Regional Chairs 2016.

The member states are requested to provide their feedback by the end of September to Mr. Zainal Azman Bin Abu Seman at <zazman@nadma.gov.my>, the Regional Chair 2017 (Malaysia), copying to Mr. Okita of the INSARAG

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Secretariat at <okitay@un.org>. The new Strategy will be discussed among the three Regional Chairs 2017, and then endorsed at the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) Meeting in Geneva in February 2017.

Mr. Okita also introduced the discussion on the National Accreditation process led by the INSARAG Americas Regional Group. The Americas Group developed some documents on this topic, which are currently open for comments. The documents (e.g. Summary document, Updated version of Annex C of Manual A, List of Criteria and Steps, etc.) are available in the below link. Comments from Asia-Pacific Region is also welcome until 10 October. All comments should be sent to William Alfonso Tovar (william.tovar@gestiondelriesgo.gov.co) in Colombia and the Secretariat (insarag@un.org, schmachtel@un.org).
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/56xmhqg0q0ou716/AABnl8JgaXeT9KuyUxk2bXYDa?dl=0>

Mr. Dewey Perks, USAID, Chair of INSARAG Training Working Group (TWG) provided some updates on the development of the UCC training package which will be delivered in France (for AEME in October 2016), Singapore (for AP in November) and the US (for Americas in January/February 2017). Regarding the UCC course in Singapore in November, the IEC classified teams in the region are encouraged to attend as well as provide support for the course.

Mr. Zhao Ming, reminded participants of the ambitious plan that the region implemented in the previous year, identifying the major milestones of the year's activities. These included the USAR Capacity Assessment Mission in the Philippines, the IEC (INSARAG External Classification) of Malaysia, and the INSARAG Regional Exercise in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, where more than 300 participants, including medical teams, attended, making the exercise one of the biggest INSARAG exercises ever. After September, the Team Leaders Meeting in Tokyo, Japan, the IER (INSARAG External Reclassification) in Korea, and the UCC (USAR Coordination Cell) training in Singapore are planned to be held in this region. Mr. Zhao Ming thanked member states for their kind support and requested their continuous support for the events after September.

Mr. Zainal Azman Bin Abu Seman, the Regional Vice-Chair 2016, Malaysia, introduced their successful IEC in Heavy classification in June 2016, becoming the 46th IEC team despite of some challenges, such as the training facility. National Disaster Management Agency (NADMA) is created not to take on the functions of other agencies such as the Malaysian Armed Forces, Police, Civil Defence Department, Firefighters and the Social Welfare department, but to manage and coordinate any disaster that occurs in the country. Malaysia thanked Singapore for their mentor support.

Mr. Choi Deokho, Deputy Fire Chief of Ministry of Public Safety and Security of Korea, shared the current state of their preparation for the coming IER in November. The KDRT (Korean Disaster Relief Team) achieved their Heavy classification in 2011, and they are planning to go through their IER in November 2016 with the mentoring of Mr. Alan Toh from Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF). Based on the IEC report of 2011, KDRT strengthened their USAR manpower capacity as well as their International USAR capacity with several international trainings and joint exercises. KDRT is being thoroughly prepared and will be ready to reclassify in November. KDRT will be able to accept up to 25 observers (maximum 3 participants/country). The interested countries should contact KDRT as soon as possible.

Mr. Yopi Haryadi, Indonesia, introduced the INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Exercise, which was held in Yogyakarta from 25 to 29 July, hosted by BASARNAS (Indonesian Search and Rescue Agency). More than 300 participants attended the exercise, and had a chance to learn the INSARAG methodologies, also testing their national response plan, HCT's (Humanitarian Country Team) contingency planning. Many EMTs (Emergency Medical Teams) also attended the exercise, and the USAR teams had a chance to practice exercise collaboration between USAR and EMTs in the field. Mr. Haryadi thanked the countries that supported the exercises. Mr. Tsukasa Katsube, Japan and part of the exercise controller team, also congratulates the

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successful exercise which was one of the biggest exercise in the history in the region. He also mentioned the details of the exercise that included size, involved components such as coordination between HCT and EMTs.

Mr. Bgen Restituto F Padillar JR, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for CMO, Office of Civil Defence, the Philippines, introduced the USAR Capacity Assessment Mission conducted by the INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Group in April 2016, and their follow-up activities. The assessment team members were released from Australia, China, Japan, Singapore and the INSARAG Secretariat. Mr. Padillar thanked the INSARAG Asia-Pacific Group for their kind support. He stated that Philippines aim to conduct their own IEC in future, with continuation of the development of their International USAR Capacity. He showed the willingness of the Philippines to host the INSARAG regional exercise in 2018. Mr. Paul McGuiggam from Australia and the deputy team leader for the assessment team, stated that Philippines is on the right direction to develop the National and the International response capacity. He is also pleased to confirm Australia will fully support Philippines for their continuous efforts towards capacity building.

Break out Discussions

Participants were divided into the 3 groups, and participated in the following three breakout discussions. Discussions were held in a round-robin style, thus all the participants had a chance to attend all the breakout discussions.

- (1) Capacity Building Strategy - Facilitated by Ms. Davene Vroon and Mr. Paul Baxter (New Zealand), Mr. Zainal Azman (Malaysia)
- (2) IER Revision - Facilitated by Mr. Kevin Walsh (Australia), Mr. Tsukasa Katsube (Japan) and Mr. Tan Teck Ming (Singapore),
- (3) Light team - Facilitated by the Light Team Working Group Members: Mr. Zhao Ruihua (China) and Mr. Brad Commens (Australia),

Summary of the Breakout discussions are attached as **Annex D**. The result of the discussions will be conveyed to the Team Leaders Meeting in Japan in September, as the feedback or input from the A-P region, and be further discussed. The final decision-making will be done at the ISG Meeting in February 2017.

Priorities for Asia-Pacific 2017 work plan

The meeting discussed a provisional work plan for 2017, based on the Regional Strategic Plan 2016-2020. Provisional agreement was reached on holding a number of events. These events are as follows:

(2017)

- INSARAG Steering Meeting and A-P Troika Meeting, Geneva (February)
- IER for New South Wales Task Force 2, Australia (August, tbc)
- INSARAG A-P Regional Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (September)
- INSARAG A-P Regional Earthquake Response Exercise, Malaysia (back to back with the Regional Meeting)
- INSARAG Team Leaders Meeting, (venue tbc)

Furthermore, the Philippines and Thailand offered to host the INSARAG A-P Regional Exercises in 2018 and 2019. The INSARAG A-P Group welcomed this forward-looking planning, and thus agreed to have the regional exercises in 2018 and 2019 as below:

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(2018)

- INSARAG A-P Earthquake Response Exercise (Philippines)

(2019)

- INSARAG A-P Earthquake Response Exercise (Thailand)

Development of Chairman's Summary, Welcoming 2017 Chair and Announcing 2017 Incoming Chair

Japan was proposed as the next Vice-Chair, becoming the Chair in 2018. Japan thanked the meeting for the nomination and agreed to stand.

Malaysia was confirmed as the Chair of the INSARAG A-P Regional Group 2017. Mr. Zainal Azman Bin Abu Seman accepted this role on behalf of Malaysia, and welcomed participants to the next A-P Regional Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in September (tbc) 2017. In accordance with decisions in the Regional Group, China becomes the Vice-Chair (out-going Vice-Chair), and Japan (in-coming Vice-Chair) will become the Vice-Chairs for this period.

Announcement of International Events by the Member States

Japan announced the INSARAG Team Leaders Meeting in Tokyo in 7-9 September, and welcomed participation from the Region.

Singapore announced the planned USAR Co-ordination Course (UCC) in 7-11 November and welcomed participants and facilitators from the IEC-classified teams in the Region. Singapore will also host the Singapore-Global Firefighters and Paramedics Challenge (SGFPC) from 11-12 November which will include the International Expert Rescuers' Exchange (IERE) where classified USAR teams come together in a workshop environment to share skills and experiences. All certified teams were invited to join the event.

Korea announced their IER planned in 14-18 November, and welcomed to the observers program from the Region. Since the number of observers is limited, the interested countries should contact KDRT as soon as possible. The related information can be downloaded at the Virtual-OSOCC website.

Closing

The INSARAG Secretariat and members of the INSARAG A-P Regional Group expressed their deepest appreciation and thanks to China for hosting and supporting the meeting.

End of INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting

ANNEXES:

Annex A: Participants List

Annex B: Meeting Agenda

Annex C: Draft INSARAG Strategy 2017-2020

Annex D1: INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Group Strategic Plan 2016-2020

2: Summary of Discussion – IER Revision

3: Summary of Discussion – Light Team