

Salient Pointers: Co-Chairmanship Working Model - GRG 2020

The first Co-Chairmanship working model was endorsed by ISG in 2018 for the Guideline Review Group (GRG) 2020. It is the first time such a working model was adopted in INSARAG. David Sochor (from Switzerland) and Anwar Abdullah (from Singapore) have been appointed to lead the Guidelines Review Group. The GRG 2020 comprised members from 18 different countries spanning across the three INSARAG regions.

It has been a challenging yet enriching experience for both of us over the last two years. We were elated with a great sense of achievement when the new Guidelines were endorsed by the ISG in February 2020. We would like to share the challenges and the key factors that helped the team to achieve its mission of completing the review in time, and deliver exciting new Guidelines

Key Challenges

It was an exciting challenge for both of us. There was neither a reference nor a guidance available for us to use in undertake this task. We embarked on this journey with numerous on-line engagements. We brainstormed and discussed the best way forward. Our subsequent meet-up was crucial for us to develop understanding and appreciation of each other's approach and management style. It was imperative for us to do so as we needed to work closely with the other members from the various INSARAG regions. As such, the key thrust for us was to form an integrated and effective team that would be able to deliver the new Guidelines by the dateline.

Success factors

Critical to our success was the clarity of mission, to review the entire Guidelines so that it remained fit for purpose and to incorporate new areas that had been endorsed by the ISG. We had to work closely with all the Working Groups and constantly engage the INSARAG communities for their inputs. With this in mind, we guided the Group to set the working objectives and agreed on the approach. Having established this working framework, we embarked on achieving the deliverables in each of the phases. As we progressed, the Guidelines were gradually developed. Paramount to this was the need to be focused and disciplined in achieving the objective in each phase. This was what guided the two of us; and it was embraced by all the members. Occasional deviation required us to intervene and realign to focus on the key issues.

To optimise the outcome of every meeting, a thorough preparation was crucial. We spent many hours discussing and preparing the contents and agendas for the meeting. This included pre-meeting discussions to firm up the contents and deliverables. Meeting contents, agenda and deliverables were shared with the members well in advance before the meeting. This helped to prepare them for the session. To assist with the overall planning and conduct of the meetings, a small team of GRG Secretariat was formed. Under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, they helped to organise the meetings and to track the status and developments of the work that were assigned to members.

Over and above the operating framework that we had, one key contributing factor was the unwavering support, commitment, efforts and teamwork shown by our members. The consultative manner in our meetings allowed inputs and ideas to be deliberated openly and eventually a consensus to be reached. We benefitted richly from the wealth of experiences, knowledge and perspectives that members brought with them.

The contributions made by various Chairs of the Working Groups was essential. Through regular dialogues and engagements, keys areas that each of them was working on were incorporated and

synergised throughout the Guidelines. We also acknowledged the invaluable support and guidance from the INSARAG Secretariat in achieving our mission.

Lastly, pivotal to all this was the great working relationship and comradeship that we developed over years. We recognised that knowing each other's style and approach was essential to create a balanced dynamics. The next critical element was to leverage each other's strengths. With these in unison, we guided and led the team to achieve the overall objective of developing a timely new Guidelines 2020!

Lastly, two pivotal factors ensured the success of our journey. First was our ability to communicate and engage the members openly and objectively. With clearly defined areas of responsibility, we worked cohesively as a team, with one voice. It bonded the group together. Second was the great relationship that both of us developed at a personal level, where mutual respect and trust deepened as we progressed. With clear division of tasks and collective responsibility, we leverage on each other's strength despite personnel preferences to guide the group to the attainment of our mission.

David & Anwar

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