

## Chairman's Summary – INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting 2018

### **Overview**

The 2018 INSARAG Africa Europe and Middle East (AEME) Regional Meeting took place on 17-18 October at the "Ecole d'Application de la Sécurité Civile", ECASC, in Valabre, Aix-En-Provence (France), kindly hosted by the Government of France and Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (Direction Générale de la Sécurité Civile et de la Gestion des Crises, DGSCGC). The event was attended by 67 participants (please see [Annex A](#)), representing 28 countries and two organizations. The objective of the meeting was to elect a Regional Troika 2019, finalize the INSARAG AEME Regional Plan for 2019, discussing the key INSARAG issues following the 2018 INSARAG Steering Group meeting, namely: Changes in the classification system and the new IER checklist, Light Teams Quality Assurance Standards Process, the National Accreditation Processes, INSARAG Global Meeting 2020, and INSARAG Guidelines review (version 2020).

The Regional Meeting was co-facilitated by France, Italy and OCHA's Response Partnerships Section in its capacity as the INSARAG Secretariat. The presentations, resource materials and products from the meeting sessions are available on the INSARAG website: <http://insarag.org>. The meeting agenda adopted by the participants can be found in [Annex B](#). A representative of the Americas' Regional Chairman, Mexico, participated in the meeting to promote the inter-regional cooperation within the INSARAG family, share expertise, experience and promote best practices.

### **Session 1 – Introduction of Participants and Adoption of Agenda**

The meeting was opened by Mr. Frederic Clowez, Representing General Director, Col. Bruno Ulliac, INSARAG National Policy Focal Point and Mr. Jesper Homer Lund, Chief, Response Partnerships Section (RPS) & INSARAG Secretary.

Mr. Clowez welcomed the meeting participants to the site of Valabre, particularly special to France as the place where all French rescue forces are trained in several areas. He stressed on the commitment of the Director General to the INSARAG principles which allow interoperability around the world with the major objective to save lives. He mentioned the recent earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia and the deployment of 40 members of France of one of the classified teams to provide drinking water to the affected population and this was an example of the different capabilities an USAR team can perform. He further stated that France supports the concept of international light teams as long as they continue to fulfill INSARAG standards. Mr. Bruno Ulliac introduced himself as the new head of the European and International Relations Unit of the French Civil Protection, thanking Mr. Nardin as his predecessor, the "Entente pour la forêt méditerranéenne" for hosting the meeting and the teams FRA 3 and FRA A to support the organization of the event. Mr. Ulliac emphasized the support France provides to the international light team concept, praising the work of Turkey with their pilot project with the NGO GEA, as well as the national accreditation process that allowed to accredit two national French teams in 2017, thanks to the support of THW. He continued expressing appreciation for all the UCC and IM trainings taking place in the region and suggesting the development of a guide about host-nation support to facilitate the deployment of international teams in a disaster-affected country.

Mr. Lund joined Mr. Clowez and Mr. Ulliac in welcoming participants and thanked France for organizing the event. He noted how the recent experiences in Mexico, Ecuador and Indonesia have shown that governments want to control the response that is coming in. This is urging the international community to rethink the way we deliver the response and reflect on what we can do to influence the decision making about acceptance of international assistance. Mr. Lund emphasized the need to build bridges with governments and regional organizations to explain our work. The recent INSARAG earthquake exercise in the Philippines has helped rebuilding trust in the international humanitarian system and understanding complementarity between the different responders.

After the round of introduction, the meeting agenda was adopted by the participants – Annex B.

### **Session 2 – Report on the implementation of the INSARAG AEME Regional Meeting 2017 decisions and INSARAG Global updates**

Mr. Christophe Debray, INSARAG Focal Point for Operations for France, presented the INSARAG AEME updates for 2017. Mr. Lund highlighted the key issues arising from the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) meeting in 2018 and provided the global INSARAG updates. Chairman Summaries of the ISG and other regional meetings are available in the INSARAG website.

## Chairman's Summary – INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting 2018

### ***Session 3 – INSARAG Working Group Updates***

The INSARAG Working Group Chairs and representatives provided an update on their ongoing work to make INSARAG fit for the future. The work of the INSARAG working groups are available for review in the INSARAG website.

### ***Session 4 – Discussion on National Accreditation Process (NAP) done so far in AEME – call for application for the Technical Support Group***

Mr. Haluk Onay Erten, Operational Focal Point of Turkey and Head of Turkish NAP Commission, presented the Turkish National accreditation process, supported by THW and France. After receiving the endorsement by the INSARAG Secretariat in November 2017, Turkey proceeded to accredited seven brigades.

Mr. Debray continued with a presentation about the NAP conducted in France where two Heavy USAR teams (FRA A and FRA B) were accredited in June 2017 and a third (FRAC-Medium) is under process. He presented France's willingness to strengthen USAR capacities in the French overseas territories, in the West Indies particularly where two Light USAR teams are being prepared for a national accreditation, and work in ongoing for an IEC later on in the West Indies. The session was concluded by Stefania Trassari, from the INSARAG Secretariat, that announced the call for application for members of the Technical Support Group in the AEME region for future NAP applications.

### ***Session 5 – Break-out Groups, Follow-up consultations and update on the key issues following ISG 2018***

The representatives of each of the key issues arising from the ISG 2018, facilitated the break-out group discussions. The groups discussed and shared their view around the following five topics: Changes in the classification system/New IER Checklist; Light Teams Quality Assurance Standards Process; National Accreditation Processes; Global Meeting 2020 and INSARAG Guidelines version 2020.

### ***Session 6 – Presentation of group discussion outcomes***

The outcomes of the discussions presented in the plenary can be found in [Annex C](#).

The second day of the meeting started with a visit to the simulation centre in Valabre organized by the host. Participants were divided in two groups and while the first group was visiting the centre, the other group attended a presentation in the main conference room by Italy about their last USAR responses which include: the earthquake in Central Italy in 2016, the avalanche that destroyed an hotel in Rigopiano in 2017; the rescue operation following the collapse of the bridge in Genoa in 2018.

### ***Session 7 – Presentation of the ERE in Armenia***

Col. Hovhannes Yemishyan, Deputy Director of Rescue Service, at the Ministry of Emergency Situations and INSARAG National Focal Point of Armenia, presented the work done in preparation for the next INSARAG Earthquake Regional Exercise (ERE), taking place in the Ministry of Emergency Situations, in Yerevan, Armenia from 3-7 December 2018. At the same time as the ERE, a commemoration for the 30th anniversary of the Spitak's earthquake will take place on 7th December, announced as Disaster Relief and Memorial Day in Armenia. Registrations for the ERE in Armenia are open on the Virtual OSOCC and IEC teams and INSARAG community are encouraged to support the event.

### ***Session 8 – EU partnership – European Emergency Response Capacity (EERC)***

Ms. Erika Conti, from the Civil Protection Policy Unit of DG ECHO – European Commission, presented the EU Civil Protection Mechanism's mandate of encouraging cooperation between Member States for preventing, protecting and coordinating response against natural and man-made disasters. Ms. Conti described the EU quality assurance process and its implementation so far. She explained the methodology used to certify the teams that includes the collection of data and a peer system, as well as the tools available as the Guidelines and grids, a pool of certification experts and the ERCC portal. Ms. Conti presented the UCPM exercise opportunities such as the modules exercises (MODEX), full scale exercises, plug-in exercises and the host national support table top exercises. As part of the partnership between INSARAG and EU, reclassifications are now taking place during MODEX. The adaptation grants from the EU provides an opportunity to improve autonomy and self-sufficiency, faster transportability, enhanced safety and security, visibility as well as support to cover the costs for an IEC.

After the presentation, the floor was opened to questions and Mr. Lund referred to the structural changes happening in the EU and what are the implications. Ms. Conti clarified that there is an ambition to foster the prevention element and response capabilities of the Commission to complement the national ones. More specifically, the EU might establish, in collaboration with EU Member States, a common European reserve of capacities to respond to disasters. At the same time, it might increase financial support for capacities registered in the European Civil Protection Pool, including for

## Chairman's Summary – INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting 2018

operational costs and transport costs (inside and outside the EU). The legislative proposal, called rescEU, is currently under negotiation with EU Member States.

### **Session 9 – Lessons learned EERC voluntary poll and proposal for teams' deployment beyond the rubble**

Mr. Christophe Libert, the Head of operations and training of the military units for Civil protection of France, presented the military units for Civil Protection of France, including those classified by INSARAG and the ones certified by EUCPM, stressing on the similarities between the two. Mr. Libert noted that INSARAG classified teams can easily adapt to EUCPM certified capacity and that certification for EUCPM capacity should be used to strengthen some non-technical capacities. He presented the proposal about the “beyond the rubble” concept, combining INSARAG/USAR capacities with EUCPM ones when deploying. He proposed example of combination of both capacities and the need to reconcile checklists between classification and certification, as well as strengthening the collaboration between the two systems. France pointed out that this topic will be central to the AEME workplan, as well as the INSARAG Strategy 2020-25. Mr. Lund from the INSARAG Secretariat suggested to collect the reflections in a public report. Mr. Post, INSARAG Policy Focal Point for The Netherlands supported the idea to include the “beyond the rubble” concept in the workplan as it has proven its values in other emergencies, like in the Caribbean and in Indonesia. Ms. Conti from the EU expressed the interest in sharing the experience with other EU states. The representative from Israel, Mr Kobi Wimisberg, asked the question about the relationships between the military and civil protection. France clarified that the military respond to the Ministry of Interior, but for missions abroad the responsibility is with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Dewey Perks, INSARAG Focal Point for the US expressed his appreciation for the presentation and suggested to share the report and find ways to promote it in the other regions.

### **Session 10 – America's experience with NAP**

Mr. Victor Alonso Aznar Osornio, Director of Sectorial Coordination of the General Directorate of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Interior of Mexico, presented the national accreditation process and the INSARAG External Support and Recognition (IESRP) in the Americas, noting that the NAP has been introduced in the region in 2003 and that since 2016 the region has adopted the INSARAG methodology to strengthen these processes.

Of the 22 countries of the Americas region, six have established national accreditation processes and seven are planning to establish one. NAPs differ across the countries and use their own national procedures and standards.

Mr. Aznar noted that the IESRP provides a general framework for the INSARAG network to provide advice and strengthen national USAR capacity. Countries that have incorporated the INSARAG methodology in their own national process are provided with INSARAG external recognition.

The process and criteria are outlined in the IESRP Manual, published in 2017 and endorsed by the ISG. It will be incorporated in the 2020 INSARAG Guidelines. The Manual outlines key criteria which has to be respected in the process:

1. It is completely voluntary and interested countries shall make a formal request to the INSARAG Secretariat in order to obtain the support
2. It is supported by a regional Technical Support Group (TSG): a roster of experts, which the appropriate profile (USAR experience, experience with the INSARAG methodology, languages). There are 12 experts in the roster at the moment.
3. Countries which would have received support through this process from the Technical Support Group will then also commit to provide appropriate experts for the regional roster.
4. The requesting country shall demonstrate its willingness to work according to the INSARAG methodology
5. Requesting country shall cover the costs related to the TSG but there may be different modalities to carry it out, including through bilateral agreements or with support from donors.

He informed the audience that Colombia has almost finalized the process and the INSARAG Recognition certificate will be given during the INSARAG Regional Meeting in Mexico next November.

In Guatemala, the process is expected to be finalized next year. Other countries – Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru – have announced plans to activate the Technical Support Group. The Central American sub-regional organization CEPREDENAC has officially endorsed the IESRP mechanism to guide its members through the NAP. Through a project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation two experts will undertake an analysis of their NAPs as they prepare to activate the mechanism.

### **Session 11 – Progression of the AEME workplan and way forward to 2019**

Mr. Debray led the plenary discussion on updating the regional workplan. Guided by the Global Strategy 2017-2020 and by the ISG 2018 decisions, the AEME regional group discussed and developed the AEME workplan for 2019.

Mr. Luigi D'Angelo, the INSARAG Focal point for Italy, presented the activities to the AEME group proposed by the next chair to be incorporated in the AEME workplan 2019. These include the prioritization of African countries where currently only Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and South Africa have classified teams, enhancing the collaboration with UNISDR,

## Chairman’s Summary – INSARAG Africa-Europe-Middle East Regional Meeting 2018

sharing the lessons learnt of the EASER project for barrier effect, promote the training center in Poggioreale to host courses for the INSARAG AEME community. Mr. Post proposed to dedicate more time to work on the workplan 2019 that will be shared for comments to the participants.

### Session 12 – Development of the Chairman’s Summary and Closing remarks

- **Election of Regional Troika 2018**

The AEME group welcomed the Troika for 2019 where Italy will be the AEME chair, Poland as the incoming chair and France as the outgoing chair.

- **Member States Announcements**

Event	Country	Timeframe
IER	USAR.NL (Heavy) Denmark	January 2019
	HUSAR 1st UIISC (Heavy) France	March 2019
	HUSAR 7th UIISC (Heavy) France	April 2019
	USAR (Heavy), Poland	June 2019
Regional UC Course	Italy	May 2019
Regional UCC	The Netherlands	28 <sup>th</sup> April – 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2019
Regional Meeting	Italy	October 2019
Regional ERE	Azerbaijan	September 2019
Regional UCC ToT	The Netherlands	November 2019
Structural engineers course	Italy	May 2019

### Closing Statements

Mr. Lund deeply appreciated France for his dedication and work done during its chairmanship in 2018 and the work done for the organization of the meeting. He reminded participants about the importance of international recognized standards for the development of their own national capacities. He further highlighted the importance for all member states to contribute to the preparation of the Global meeting which is the opportunity to meet and engage with other regions. He concluded by thanking all member states for their support to the INSARAG activities and their engagement in the event.

Mr. Christophe Debray, on behalf of Mr. Ulliac, joined Mr. Lund in expressing his deepest appreciation to the INSARAG AEME group, as well as the INSARAG Secretariat and its staff and the French local resources that helped organizing the event.

The next INSARAG AEME Regional Meeting will be held in Italy.

### ANNEXES:

Annex A: Participants List

Annex B: Meeting Agenda

Annex C: Discussions and Proposals from the AEME Group on ISG Topics Arisen for regional discussions