



United Nations Office
for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs



INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise Guide

Chapeau

OCHA Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS)
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Abbreviations and Definitions

INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group - a global network under the United Nations umbrella dealing with urban search and rescue (USAR) related issues.
INSARAG Guidelines	The methodology of INSARAG is described in its Guidelines.
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies.
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination – a team of specialists tasked with situation assessment and coordinating the international response.
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue – the process of searching, locating and rescuing people trapped within collapsed buildings.
EMT	Emergency Medical Team – an organisation deploying from outside the affected country to offer medical assistance.
LEMA	Local Emergency Management Agency - the national organisation responsible for disaster management.
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team - a strategic and operational decision-making and oversight forum established and led by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.
OSOCC	On-Site Operations and Coordination Centre – a rapid response tool that provides a platform for the coordination of international response activities.
V-OSOCC	Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre – web-based part of the OSOCC system.
RDC	Reception and Departure Centre – a coordination tool usually established at the point of entry for international teams.
UCC	Coordination Cell for USAR teams – part of OSOCC.
EMT CC	Coordination Cell for Emergency Medical Teams – part of the OSOCC.
IHP	International Humanitarian Partnership – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
APHP	Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
AST	Americas Support Team – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle – a coordinated series of actions related to humanitarian response.
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee - the primary mechanism for inter- agency coordination of humanitarian assistance.
EXCON	Exercise Coordination – the group responsible for the delivery and coordination of the Exercise Phase.

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Acknowledgements:	<p>The ERE Guide was developed and revised following close and extensive consultations with numerous stakeholders from national governments, disaster response management organisations, OCHA and UN agencies, INSARAG Working Groups and practitioners, the World Health Organisation emergency medical teams, UN Country Teams and other appropriate organisations and individuals.</p> <p>The Guide was tested during the regional response exercises in Mongolia and Chile in 2015 and finalised following feedback from these events. The ERE Guide remains a living document and will be reviewed in line with the INSARAG Guidelines, once every five years. Any feedback can be sent to the INSARAG Secretariat at insarag@un.org</p>

INSARAG Secretariat
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Introduction

This is the INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise (ERE) Guide. The package comprises of four (4) Volumes and contains guidance, advice and support for:

- Organisations considering, planning or preparing to host an INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise.
- UN-OCHA and FCSS staff supporting and coordinating ERE events.
- INSARAG Regional Management supporting the running of an ERE event.
- Facilitators, speakers, EXCON staff and other organisers participating, leading or involved in the delivery of an Earthquake Response Exercise.

Whilst the Guide IS NOT intended to be distributed to or read by ERE participants, it does contain templates for documents and forms that will be shared with the participants. The component parts of the ERE Guide are as follows:

- **Volume I: Exercise Planning and Preparation**
- **Volume II: Event Delivery and Evaluation**
- **Volume III: Guide for the Functional Participant Groups**
- **Volume IV: Event Toolbox**

Overview of Volume I: Exercise Planning and Preparation

Volume I – Part A should be the focus of organisations considering hosting an Earthquake Response Exercise and those people wishing to gain awareness about the event. It describes the purpose and concept of the INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise and what the context of the ERE is within the wider humanitarian capacity building programme. It also explains how hosting such an exercise will benefit the host country and its disaster response organisations.

Part A recommends as wider participation as possible, explaining how potential partner organisations can be involved in the Functional Participant Groups within the exercise. In Part A, the overall goals of the event are listed along with the learning outcomes for the various Functional Groups.

Volume I – Part B describes in detail the planning processes necessary for hosting an ERE event and offers advice as to the setting up of a Planning Team and the establishment of a Planning Timeline on which to base preparations.

Volume I - Part C offers guidance concerning the facility and organisational requirements to host a successful ERE event. Part C also contains templates and tools that the organisers may find useful in the planning and preparation for an event.

Overview of Volume II: Event Delivery and Evaluation

Volume II is intended to guide facilitators, coordinators, speakers and other organisers through the actual delivery of the Earthquake Response Exercise. It runs through the activities in chronological sequence, referring to a generic event agenda and explaining that there are distinct phases of the event. **Volume II – Part A** focuses on the preliminary activities followed by the Exercise Preparation Phase. It contains templates for presentations and details the main learning outcomes for each of the sessions in the Exercise Preparation Phase.

Volume II – Part B provides detailed guidance and explains the chronological sequence of activities within the Simulation Exercise Phase.

A key group in the delivery of the Earthquake Response Exercise is the Exercise Coordination team, known as EXCON. **Volume II - Part C** has been developed to support the EXCON team, listing their tasks and responsibilities and providing them with tools, such as a Master Exercise Timeline and other templates and documents.

Volume II – Part D explains how the event should be evaluated, focussing on the role of EXCON in evaluating the learning experience and providing feedback to the participants. Part D also provides a template for an evaluation form for participants.

Overview of Volume III: Functional Participant Groups

The benefits of the INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise are only fully realised if participation is across the whole range of humanitarian actors, both national and international. This broad participation is organised into separate Functional Groups within the exercise, each with its own tasks and objectives, thus mirroring a real sudden onset disaster.

Volume III provides guidance and information for the EXCON team, facilitators and other organisers relating to the participation and conduct through the exercise for each of the Functional Participant Groups. For the organisers it also suggests what the target audience for each Functional Group should be and touches on the suitability of participants.

Overview of Volume IV: Event Toolbox

The development of **Volume IV** will consist primarily of links to downloadable documents, presentations, photographs, forms and other material that will ease the process of organising such an event as well as providing INSARAG with product continuity and standardisation that will improve the ERE experience. This in turn will lead to better, more predictable benefits for the hosting organisations as well as an improved learning experience for the participants.

Methodology of the Earthquake Response Exercise Guide

The methodology of the ERE Guide provides flexibility to facilitators, speakers and the EXCON, determining what needs to be achieved and not how it is done.

It is the responsibility of facilitators, presenters and members of the EXCON team to decide how to deliver the content and when and what the best format and delivery method will be. These will change depending upon a number of variables such as the country and region in which the ERE is taking place, the learning culture and experience of the participants.

It will also be the responsibility of the hosts and organisers to consider if it will be necessary or appropriate to plan and organise any pre-learning activities, workshops or events before the Earthquake Response Exercise event itself. Any pre-learning activities should be planned and undertaken by the host country in consultation and collaboration with the INSARAG Secretariat and the INSARAG Regional community, ensuring continuity of learning and preventing duplication of effort.

To guide the decisions of EXCON and the event organisers, **Volume I – Part A: Annex B** and **Volume III** list all the Learning Outcomes for each Functional Groups as well as the primary content that each group needs to access in the Exercise Preparation Phase.

Each Part in **Volume III** also contains a detailed timeline, specific to that Functional Group, detailing the primary tasks that each need to perform and giving ideas for injects that EXCON may deliver to ensure that the tasks are undertaken and the learning outcomes are met.

In summary, Volume I is for the use of the organisers or hosts in planning for an ERE event. It is recommended that the organisers and the EXCON team use **Volume II** as a guide to overall coordination and **Volume III** to ensure that each Functional Group undertakes its primary tasks and meets its learning outcomes, whilst coordinating its activities with other groups. **Volume IV** is a repository of tools, templates and supporting material necessary to run a successful INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise.

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