

Draft Concept Note for the 3rd INSARAG
Global Meeting (IGM)
6 October 2021, 1300 – 1600h CET (UTC +2)
V22July2021



30th Anniversary of INSARAG

The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was **established in 1991** to facilitate coordination between the international USAR teams who make themselves available for deployment to countries experiencing devastating events of structural collapse due primarily to earthquakes. Since then, INSARAG has **constantly adapted** and improved its globally recognized and accepted quality standards and methodology to save more lives.

INSARAG is a **model for collapsed structure rescue** which is a critical element of humanitarian response. Up until today, 56 international teams have successfully achieved the globally recognized United Nations INSARAG External Classification (IEC) status. These standards guarantee that INSARAG Classified USAR teams add value to disaster response which compliments national efforts. Not only have these standards garnered wide international support, but have also been adopted by other UN agencies, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), who identified the benefits of such a system for their work. The **UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150** on "*Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance*" (2002) has underpinned the progress achieved over the last three decades in the areas of effective preparation and response.

In 2021, INSARAG is **commemorating 30 years** of life-saving assistance. The network aims to stay adaptable to the changing response environment to help prepare for, manage and deliver well-coordinated humanitarian response.

3rd INSARAG Global Meeting

In 2008, the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) agreed to bring the three regions together once every five years to discuss the interoperability of the network and its way ahead. Substantial progress in **quality assurance and in strengthening the effectiveness and coordination** of national and international USAR assistance was achieved with the first Global Meeting in Japan, captured in the Hyogo Declaration of 2010 and with the second Global Meeting in the United Arab Emirates, recorded in the Abu Dhabi Declaration of 2015.

In 2021, **Poland** will host the 3rd INSARAG Global Meeting (IGM), which, due to global pandemic related restrictions, will be held as a virtual meeting, bringing together the regional groups, the technical working groups as well as policy, operations and USAR team focal points and other relevant INSARAG partners. The network of policy and technical experts will discuss and deliberate on new ways of strengthening preparedness through localisation and delivering life-saving flexible international assistance.

The event provides an opportunity for USAR teams focal points from all over the world to share their expertise and to learn from good practices across the regions striving for a **global approach**. The network's future direction will be captured in the **INSARAG Warsaw Declaration (Annex A)** and serve to guide the **INSARAG Strategic Plan 2021-2026 (Annex B)**.

INSARAG 30 Years On: Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Following global consultations in 2018, 2019 and 2020, the network has welcomed and endorsed the following **four Strategic Objectives of INSARAG Strategic Plan 2021-26** and agreed that the regions will take the lead in elaborating the objectives in preparation for the Global Meeting 2021.

1) STRENGTHENING QUALITY STANDARDS

Efforts to improve the system will focus on global quality assistance at all levels of response. These will include the strengthening of national capacities for coordination of national and international USAR assistance through localization of international guidance and the adoption of the INSARAG Recognised National Accreditation Process (IRNAP) by Member States in capacity building initiatives.

2) **BOOSTING LOCALIZATION**

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted how international response operates and highlighted once more the importance of a localized approach to disaster preparedness and response. It is vital that Member States keep enhancing the effectiveness of frontline emergency response coordination by adapting, localizing and incorporating the well-established INSARAG standards and methodology into disaster preparedness and response plans as well as into national and international training programmes.

3) **ADVANCING FLEXIBLE RESPONSE**

Whilst INSARAG classified teams provide specialised Urban Search and Rescue services, flexibility in response operations across other search and rescue activities and even beyond is vital in meeting emerging challenges. When faced with increasingly frequent climate and health-related crises and multi-faceted humanitarian emergencies, INSARAG must adapt whilst maintaining the high quality of its core services. Thus, the INSARAG Steering Group Meeting 2021 decided on creating a dedicated Flexible Response Working Group to establish a dialogue among all Regional Groups and reach a global approach.

4) **BOLSTERING PARTNERSHIPS**

INSARAG looks back on numerous well-established partnerships with regional and national actors. The network aims to find ways to collaborate with Member States to promote INSARAG methodologies and specific national arrangements that, together, will enhance preparedness and resilience.

The INSARAG network proposes the following theme for the 3rd Global Meeting:

“Strengthen Quality, Predictability, Speed and Flexibility in Support of National and Local Capacities.”

Proposed Agenda for the 3rd INSARAG Global Meeting

The current COVID-19 crisis, with general travel restrictions and health risk concerns, impedes the possibility of holding a face-to-face meeting. Therefore, it has been decided that **the 2021 Global Meeting will be organized and led by Poland as a one-day three-hour virtual event on 6 October 2021**. Drawing from good practices introduced at the HNPW 2021, the meeting will be divided in two thematic sessions of one and half hours each. The working language of the meeting is English and translation into other languages will be provided at discretion of Member States and Regional Offices.

The participants include the INSARAG Global Chair, the Regional Chairs and Troikas, the Working Group Chairs, all INSARAG global network members, and relevant humanitarian partners.

The following agenda is proposed:

Part I: 13:00-14:50 Opening, Policy, Technical and Operational Achievements

1) **Session 1 - 13:00-13:25** - Opening Statements and Adoption of the Agenda

Polish State Representative (TBC), SG/USG (TBC), INSARAG Global Chair, Chief Commandant of the Polish State Fire Services. Moderated by the Chief Emergency Response Section and INSARAG Secretary

2) **Session 2 - 13:25-13:55** - Reflections on 30 years of Regional Achievements

Regional Chairs (Indonesia, South Africa, Peru). Moderated by the INSARAG Secretariat

3) Session 3 - 13:55-14:25 - Technical Reflections on INSARAG's 30 years of Quality Standards, Guidelines and Methodology

Technical Team Leaders identified (one per region). Moderated by the INSARAG Secretariat

One technical expert nominated by each region presents the most significant achievements of the network. The following topics are proposed:

- a. Reflections on 17 years of IEC/R.
- b. INSARAG Preparedness and Localization (capacity building, NAP, IRNAP).
- c. Flexible Response.
- d. From OSOCC to UCC and Information Management in INSARAG Methodology (tools and means).

4) Session 4 - 14:25-14:40 - Bolstering Partnerships 30 years On WHO EMT, EU, Americas Firefighters Organization, Regional Organizations (TBC). Moderated by ERS-JEU (TBC-organizations to be identified by the regions)

Break: 14:40 – 14:50

Part II: 14:50 - 16:00 30th INSARAG Anniversary

5) Session 5 - 14:50-15:00 Launch of the INSARAG Exposure Story commemorating 30 years of INSARAG and of This is INSARAG Chief Response Support Branch, INSARAG Global Chair, ERS (NB/CC-TBC). Moderated by Asia-Pacific Regional Focal Point.

6) Session 6 - 15:00 -15:30 – Endorsement of the Warsaw Declaration

Senior Polish State Representative (TBC), INSARAG Global Chair, acting Director Coordination Division, Regional Chairs. Moderated by AEME Regional Focal Point.

7) Session 7 - 15:30 -15:45 – The voice of INSARAG founding members and pioneers. Pioneer Members Moderated by the Americas Regional Focal Point.

8) Session 8 - 15:45 - 16:00 – Closing Remarks

Chief Commandant of the Polish State Fire Services, Chief Emergency Response Section and INSARAG Secretary, INSARAG Global Chair. Moderated by the AEME Regional Focal Point..

Proposed Framework for Virtual Engagements in Preparation for the IGM

The Global Meeting offers an opportunity for INSARAG Operations, Policy Focal Points from Member States and technical experts, to collectively discuss how to implement the content of the Warsaw Declaration and share good practices from their regions. The Global Meeting will be preceded and complemented by **8 important events and discussion platforms, led by the respective Regional and Working Groups Chairs and supported by Poland and the Secretariat**, with the objective of exploring key themes and encouraging experience sharing for **global consultations ahead of the IGM**. The eight main engagements

leading to the IGM are presented in Table 1. Detailed information about the IGM and the complementary sessions are available at: [\(link\)](#).

The eight main engagements are:

1. 3 Virtual Regional Meetings (August – Mid-September)

The Regional Offices (AEME, the Americas, Asia-Pacific) will organize their respective regional meetings virtually to discuss **the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2021-2026 tailored to their regional needs**. Poland will moderate the discussion led by the Regionals Chairs (supported by the Secretariat) on the **Warsaw Declaration**, to be endorsed at the IGM.

The dates of the Regional Meetings are the following:

- AEME: 3 September, 1000 to 1300 SA Time
- The Americas: 14-16 September (TBC)
- Asia-Pacific: end of August (TBC)

2. 1 Technical Meeting of Working Groups and Team Leaders (September)

The Technical Working Groups (WGs) representing all regions and USAR Team Leaders who will attend as observers, will meet on 14 September for a preparatory meeting, moderated by Poland and supported by the INSARAG Secretariat. Primarily, the meeting will provide a space for consultations on the **Warsaw Declaration, from a technical perspective**, based on INSARAG methodology and quality standards. WGs' common challenges and technological advances that have contributed to saving lives will also be discussed.

3. 1 Briefing on the IGM with the Global and Regional Chairs and OCHA's Representatives (1st week of October)

A briefing session will take place on the first week of October with the Global and Regional Chairs and OCHA's Representatives. The purpose of the briefing is to **showcase the IGM agenda and clarify any questions or concerns** by the Steering Group Members. The IGM organizers will also outline the progress that has been made prior to the Global Meeting. Since there would have already been opportunities for consultations among INSARAG members and the Steering Group, we anticipate that this briefing will be an opportunity to present the work done thus far, and not another chance to propose changes or revisions to the schedule or IGM workplan.

4. 1 Virtual Exhibition Area (whole October)

The Virtual Exhibition Area is a dedicated section on the website used to showcase **regional projects and humanitarian preparedness and response technologies**. In this section, participants can display information about their area of work and expertise. Exhibition area organizers can also schedule specific interactive sessions to provide additional clarification and host Q&A sessions.

Applicants may submit their **registration**, a short and clear abstract about what they intend to showcase and if they wish to, they can record the live sessions that will be available on the online portal two weeks after the respective events. A call for session organizers, with further information on registration, will be launched by the INSARAG Secretariat in July.

5. The IGM Discussion Threads by Region (whole October)

The IGM Discussion Threads aims to enhance and **facilitate discussion about specific technical issues among relevant expert members**. In a dedicated page on the IGM portal, participants can propose specific issues for discussion and open the floor to comments and replies. The discussions will be organized around topics and by region. The discussion threads will stay open during the month of October to allow enough time for members to share views and build consensus in a transparent and inclusive manner. The Secretariat reserves the right to moderate posts and threads. When posting, the members agree that the administrators have the right to delete, edit or close any topic of discussion which at any time might be offensive, copyrighted or spam.

6. The Canvas Sheets (whole October)

The Canvas Sheets is a dedicated section on the portal that can be used by participants to share **quotes, photos, videos and any or other multimedia materials in commemoration of the 30th anniversary** of INSARAG. Members from different regions can share regional materials, photos of trainings, exercises, responses and any other media with the Secretariat, which will upload it on the IGM portal. Interested members can send their inputs and materials to insarag@un.org.

Communication tools and technical arrangements

WebEx will serve as the platform for remote conferencing allowing participants to connect from around the world to the INSARAG Global Meeting. Other options will be explored by the INSARAG Secretariat and discussed with Poland and Regional Offices.

An interactive event programme will be established on a dedicated web portal by the INSARAG Secretariat to display scheduled sessions, exhibition area, and Canvas Sheets in separate tabs.

Participant registration for the INSARAG Global Meeting (main event) will be done through the online event program, whereby participants gain access to the connection details for the remote conference upon registration. Automatic reminders containing connection details will be sent automatically to registered participants prior to session start (first reminder two days prior, last reminder two hours prior).

The Canvas Sheets will allow participants to exchange views and comments in different discussion threads.

The Regional Virtual Meetings and the Technical Meeting of Working Groups and Team Leaders will be included in the online event programme as “private” meetings which will not allow public registration. The registration links and related reminders for those meetings will sent directly to invitees by the INSARAG Secretariat.

Through the online portal, all public visitors will have access to session abstracts of scheduled meetings, related uploaded background and presentation material, as well as the meeting outcomes upon completion of the sessions.

The Road to the IGM: 4 months planning phase

Discussions aiming to consolidate feedback on the established theme and directions, while considering any other areas that will propel INSARAG, will take place in 2021 prior to October. The table below presents the **six main engagements leading towards the IGM** and the **preparation over a period of 4 months** (June-September).

Month /Week	Week 1 (1-10)	Week 2 (13-17)	Week 3 (20-24)	Week 4 (27-31)	8 virtual engagements + IGM <i>(in blue)</i>
Jun	03.06 1 st Bilateral Meeting INSARAG Secretariat-Poland.	15.06 Design the IGM online portal interface, drawing from HNPW's best practices-(ERS Secretariat).	23.06 Bilateral Meeting INSARAG Secretariat – Poland, Global and Regional Chairs.	25.06 Save the date message (sent). Finalization of Concept Note with the Warsaw Declaration with Poland and Global and Regional Chairs.	
Jul	19.07 Reminder for sessions registration and access to the online portal. First Newsletter.	23.07 Bilateral Meeting INSARAG Secretariat-Poland.	If necessary, additional bilateral meeting INSARAG Secretariat-Poland.		
Aug	06.08 Official invitation goes out sent by the Secretariat on behalf of Poland.	16.08 Second Newsletter.	Date TBA Monthly Bilateral Meeting.	(1) End August (TBC) - Asia-Pacific Regional Virtual Meeting	
Sept	(1) 3.9 -AEME Regional Virtual Meeting 06.09 Monthly Bilateral Meeting INSARAG Secretariat – SFS of Poland.	(2) 14.9 - Technical Meeting of Working Groups and Team Leaders. (1) 14-16.9 (TBC) - Americas Regional Virtual Meeting 20.09 Confirmation of speakers	21.09 Confirmation on documents and technical set-up. Poland: preparatory meeting (Global Chair, Regional Chairs [troikas], WGs Chairs and Secretariat) – final agreement on the documents and IGM format.	28.09 Briefing sessions with Global and Regional Chairs, Troika members and OCHA Representatives. Deadline for registration of Exhibition Area organizers.	

		(presenters and VIP). Gentle reminder sent by the Secretariat on behalf of Poland. Third newsletter.			
Oct	1.10 Final gentle reminder (3) Briefing on the IGM with the Global and Regional Chairs and Troika, and OCHA's Representatives. 4.10 - TBC Secretariat team arrives in Warsaw, invited by Poland.	6.10 INSARAG Global Meeting			(4) Whole October - Virtual Exhibition Booth (5) Whole October - IGM Discussion Threads and Canvas Sheet (6) Whole October - Canvas Sheet

Annexes

- [Annex A](#) Warsaw Declaration – For Endorsement at the IGM
- [Annex B](#) INSARAG Strategic Plan 2021-2026 – Endorsed on 27 January 2021