



Chairman's Summary
INSARAG Technical Meeting of Working Groups and
Team Leaders
14 September 2021



Overview

On 14 September 2021 INSARAG Technical Meeting of Working Groups (WG) and Team Leaders (TL) took place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting, which was organized by the INSARAG Secretariat, discussed the WG and TL updates, the Global Updates preceding the Third INSARAG Global Meeting (IGM) and the consultations on the Warsaw Declaration with the participation of Lieutenant Colonel Michał Langner, Deputy Director, National Center for Rescue Coordination and Civil Protection, National Headquarters of the State Fire Service of Poland

The TWG and TL Meeting was facilitated by Mr. Roberto Colangelo, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, INSARAG Secretariat.

The presentations, supporting documents and products from the meeting sessions are available on the INSARAG website: <http://insarag.org>.

Session 1: Opening statements and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was opened by Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa, Chief of the Emergency Response Section and INSARAG Secretary. He acknowledged that the technical expertise is being challenged to respond to increasingly complex humanitarian emergencies due to the combined effects of COVID-19, climate change and conflict. He recognized the efforts of the eight WG in sharing their technical expertise while supporting national COVID-19 response efforts. INSARAG organised and took part in many online meetings, training, Virtual Earthquake Response Simulated Exercise (ERSIMEX) and virtual conferences on the non-clinical aspects of COVID19 response.

He highlighted the key achievements made since the last Technical Meeting of WG and TL:

1. A Flexible Response Working Group (FRWG) was established to operationalise a global flexible response approach, which is crucial to ensure INSARAG remains flexible considering the operational complexities exacerbated by an exponential increase in hazards.
2. Despite being postponed, teams continued to prepare for INSARAG External Classification (IEC) and INSARAG External Reclassification (IER). The upcoming IEC will take place from 20 to 24 September in Khabarovsk, Russia. In November, the first light team will undergo the IEC in Geneva.

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3. INSARAG Coordination Management System (ICMS) welcomed the role of Member States in contributing to the multiyear system and licencing arrangements, which will make the system financially effective for the future. This reiterates the importance of continuing to improve the ICMS based on lessons learnt, for instance during the deployment to Lebanon and Haiti.

Mr. Sebastian Rhodes Stampa remarked on the importance of the localization agenda to enhance frontline response coordination and bring INSARAG's methodologies closer to the people we serve. Over the years, the network has enhanced the capabilities of local communities through the First Response Programme (FRP) and National Accreditation Process (NAP).

He informed that the TWG supported the virtual Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) coordination first responders training which is essential to ensure INSARAG remains efficient while being unable to train on the ground. He reiterated his gratitude to the Medical Working Group (MWG) for their ongoing collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) for the [Joint Statement](#), which has been an invaluable resource to streamline INSARAG's methodologies and field response coordination during the COVID-19.

In commemoration of the past 30 years, INSARAG has been developing its Guidelines that will serve as a universal language across all teams. The Guidelines are a key instrument that has helped INSARAG evolve over the decades and will help the network adapt to future challenges. The INSARAG Secretary addressed the upcoming IGM on 06 October hosted by Poland and expressed the importance of the endorsement of the Warsaw Declaration which is a fundamental step towards reinforcing the mandate of saving lives where it matters most. He expressed his sincere gratitude to all WG and TL for their hard work during these challenging times and wished participants an engaging meeting.

Session 2: Working Groups and INSARAG Secretariat Updates

Mr. Roberto Colangelo introduced Session two and the Co-Chairs of the eight WG (1) Flexible Response WG, (2) IEC/R WG, (3) Information Management WG, (4) Light Team WG, (5) Medical WG, (6) National Accreditation WG, (7) Training WG, (8) Transitional Guidelines Review WG, for them to provide an update on their progress and work plans for 2021/2022.

1. Flexible Response Working Group:

The two FRWG Co-Chairs introduced the recently constituted WG and its structure. The FRWG is divided into three Sub-WGs: Global Position (Sub-WG Co-Chairs Mr. Thomas Zeiter and Mr. Otty Rusinarsetyo), Disaster Assessment Coordination Centre (DACC) (Sub-WG Co-Chairs Ms. Solveig Thorvaldsdottir and Mr. Joshua Macabuag) and

Cultural Heritage (Sub-WG Co-Chairs Ms. Jing Wang and Ms. Aparna Tandon). The FRWG will be composed of 53 members in total, with 17% of women.

- INSARAG External Classification and Reclassification Working Group:
Mr. Dewey Perks, IEC/R WG Co-Chair, stated the complexity of working due to the COVID 19. He expressed his concern with the issues regarding the list of 2021 classifiers, together with the necessity to receive clarification on the IEC & IER WG Terms of Reference (ToRs).

Ms. Marie Mure, from the INSARAG Secretariat, reflected on the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic on the IEC/Rs since March 2020, namely, the IEC/R postponement of two years. INSARAG Secretariat with the approval of the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) Meeting extended for two years the classification validity. Given these challenges, the selection of classifiers will be wider for each classification to ensure its progress. The INSARAG Secretariat will aim to complete 12 classifications/reclassifications per year, giving priority to classifications from last year which have been postponed. She thanked the network for the strong support to the call for applications for the roster of classifiers per region sent at the beginning of 2021 and encouraged the teams waiting to be classified to reconfirm their participation.

- Information Management Working Group:
Mr. Jeff Maunder, Information Management WG (IMWG) Co-Chair, informed the participants about the completion of the ESRI USAR licenses which have already been delivered to all classified teams together with the regional training virtual sessions. The IMWG is working together with the Training WG in a subgroup to update the USAR Coordination Cell (UCC) manual and to incorporate ICMS into UCC training. Moreover, ICMS 2.0 was delivered to two of the three regions and will have ICMS 2.0 delivered to all classified teams by the end of September 2021. He highlighted the attention received from UN partners by ICMS in Beirut and Haiti, where it was activated. The work plan for 2021/2022 presented by Mr. Jeff Maunder will continue to review and update the ICMS training material, explore the possibilities to work with UN partners around information sharing and integration coming from ICMS and progress in the integration of Unmanned Aerial Systems imagery into the INSARAG information systems environments. He highlighted how once ICMS is implemented on all classified teams they will be working on a Mentor concept for NAP teams. Mr. Peter Wolff, the Co-Chair, encouraged the network to work together to progress on the financing of ICMS, due to the high value of the system, and thanked the Netherlands for sponsoring ICMS for the past two years.

- Light Team Working Group:
Mr. Rob Davis, Light Team WG (LTWG) Co-Chair, underlined how COVID 19 has affected the progress of the WG on the planned IECs. They informed the participants of the completion of the Classified Light USAR IEC assurance process approved by INSARAG. Regarding the first classification, Mr. Rob Davis highlighted the importance of the first light team classification for the quality assurance process, the @Fire team from Germany will undergo the process in November 2021.

Comentado [NB3]: normalmente en los titulos no va las abreviaciones, se pone el nombre entero. sugiero pongas el nombre del grupo cuando pones co-chair, porque asi solo queda raro, por ej aqui podrias poner information management working group (imwg) co-chair, fijate antes de poner el acronimo tambien que no este mencionado antes como es el caso por ej de frwg y iec/r

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5. Medical Working Group (MWG):
Mr. Antony Macintyre, MWG Chair, informed that the WG continues working in the engagements with WHO-EMT and in the ongoing revision of Medical Guidelines. Regarding the work plan for 2021/2022, the WG will continue to monitor the progress of the COVID 19 pandemic and incorporate the relevant emerging scientific evidence into MWG technical reference notes.
6. National Accreditation Working Group: Mr. Sebastian Mocarquer, National Accreditation WG (NAWG) Co-Chair, analyzed the results from the INSARAG Recognized National Accreditation Process (IRNAP) Survey, the key findings from the survey were the great interest in the IRNAP process, with high demand to the INSARAG network and the disparity in national USAR and NAP systems as a challenging factor for a global approach. The WG will continue to work on updating the Technical Note on the IRNAP. He underlined the challenges faced, given that the WG has never met face to face, and informed the participants about NAWG Technical Workshop planned for late November 2021.
7. Training Working Group: Ms. Kira Chebakova, Training WG (TWG) Co-Chair, informed that the WG has worked on the USAR Coordination Manual update, the national USAR Coordination Course supporting virtually the WGs and the revision of the FRP. The planned route for the TWG is to achieve the endorsement of the USAR Coordination Manual revision by USAR teams and the ISG, continue to update the USAR Coordination Course Package and deliver INSARAG IEC/IER Leadership training for Secretariat Representatives, TL and Mentors.

Update on First Responders Program (FRP): Mr. Peter Goxharaj confirmed that the pandemic has brought the opportunity to do the First Responders Program virtually, nonetheless the program will be hybrid, the theoretical module will be virtual but with a face-to-face closing exercise. The FRP 2.0 by the TWG will be done with a tri-partite approach: "Classic" First Responders (firefighters) with more specific techniques, "Normal" First Responders (Citizens) with more assistance and details and the Virtual First Responders. The final testing of the FRP v2.0 will be completed by the TWG between Autumn 2021 and Spring 2022, and it will take place in Cyprus and Georgia.
8. Transitional Guidelines Review Group: Mr. David Lewis, Transitional Guidelines Review Group (TGRG) Co-Chair, informed the participants about the work of the WG on the revision of the Draft USAR Coordination Manual, the presentation of the Senior Executive Program in Disaster Management and the presentation of the Organization de Bomberos Americanos (OBA).

Session 3: Warsaw Declaration: Technical Consultations for Endorsement

Lieutenant Colonel Michał Langner, , led the discussions on the technical consultations for the endorsement of the Warsaw Declaration during the Third IGM that will be virtually hosted by Poland on the 6th of October 2021.

During the first two IGM in 2010 (Japan) and 2015 (United Arab Emirates), the Hyogo and Abu Dhabi Declarations were endorsed, therefore the Warsaw Declaration is under regional and technical consultations leading to its endorsement in the IGM. The content of the WD has been discussed throughout the year and there are currently 13 points established. Ongoing discussions are taking place from certain regions on some of the Declaration's points, regarding the obligation for rescuers to be vaccinated and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Lt. Col. Michał Langner presented the five pillars of the Warsaw Declaration:

1. **Quality Standards:** The Warsaw Declaration is a guide for the Strategic Plan for 2021-2026 and all regions were asked to submit inputs to be included in the WD to understand which pillars are crucial for each region.
2. **Localization:** This pillar focuses on localising response in disaster-prone countries and the development of the idea of the NAP.
3. **Flexible Response:** It is mostly described in clause seven. Despite the Civil Union Mechanism, the Europe Region needs to start this discussion in all regions.
4. **Partnerships:** This pillar highlights the importance of inviting new members to share the ideas they have developed in the last 30 years and to be open to new members to promote partnership for different platforms.
5. **Pandemic Response:** One crucial element in this pillar is the calls for support of the government around the world in fighting crises by all INSARAG field response teams and medical teams.

Session 4: INSARAG Global Updates

Ms. Haruka Ezaki, INSARAG AP Regional Focal Point, delivered five key INSARAG Global Updates from the Secretariat.

1. **The Network Adapts:**
 - The establishment of the FRWG was formed very recently and represents all regions.
 - INSARAG has been responding to the pandemic, starting with the Beirut port explosion in August 2020 and in August 2021 with two deployments, the first deployment included the forest fires in Europe, and the second deployment to Haiti, where the ICMS was also operationalized.
 - IEC/R two-year extension is still valid and the IEC/R WG was formed.

- The MWG developed a guide of field responses in the pandemic and the Joint Statement was made together with WHO EMT. The guide is still being updated by the WG.
 - ICMS was operationalized and currently the INSARAG Secretariat is having consultations with member states to fund this system for the next few years.
2. Going Virtual:
- In Americas Region, Peru hosted a successful virtual Simulated Exercise (SIMEX) in June 2021.
 - Asia Pacific Regional Group planning a virtual Earthquake Response Exercise (ERE) on 24 – 26 November hosted by China and co-led by Indonesia. First EXCON meeting held 14 September and next steps and work plans were agreed upon.
 - UNDAC refresher course was extended to USAR starting from July. The next ERSIMEX is held on the 4-5 November.
3. Quality Standards:
- FRPV2.0 is being reviewed and WG is working on its implementation.
4. Partnerships:
- At the ISG 2021 the concept of IER taking place as EU MODEX is being adopted.
 - First Response Guidelines discussed with the WHO EMT and there has been an operational response together in Haiti.
 - IER WG for EMT has been established and INSARAG is supporting this from the network's perspective.
5. Face to Face meetings, trainings, and IEC/R:
- The Joint IER IEC will be held in Switzerland in November where the first light USAR team, @FIRE Germany, will be classified.
 - Hybrid Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) will take place in 2022 as a three-week event on 02-20 May. Week one and three will be held remotely and Week two will take place physically in Geneva. During week two, there are plans for INSARAG Steering Group meeting to be conducted in Switzerland.

Mr. Clement Pauty, from the INSARAG Secretariat, presented the Draft 2022 Calendar for the INSARAG Secretariat. He informed that 12 IEC/Rs are planned for 2022. The hybrid HNPW/ISG event will be held physically in Geneva in May. TL meeting will be held in Qatar, in March. Several remote trainings planned for 2022: IRNAP Exercise in Singapore and a Field Exercise in North Macedonia. The next Regional Meetings are expected to be held in Seoul for Asia Pacific, Istanbul for Africa, Europe and Middle East (AEME) and Buenos Aires for The Americas. The WG meetings are dependent on the frequency chosen by Chairs and Co-Chairs of the WG. He underlined that this is a draft calendar for 2022 so new meetings, trainings and events can be added and/or modified. The Calendar 2022 will be shared in the incoming weeks.



On behalf of the INSARAG Secretariat, Ms. Noelia Blascovich presented the ongoing third IGM preparations. She informed that the IGM is preceded by three Regional Meetings and one Technical Meeting of WG and TL. The AP and AEME Regional Meetings have taken place already with a high number of participants, 105 and 90, respectively. The Americas Regional Meeting started on 14 September with 42 registered participants.

She underlined that the Final Briefing to the Global, Regional, and Working Group Chairs will take place on 04 October 1400-1530 CEST. The third IGM will be held on 06 October 13h00-16h00 CEST with 204 participants registered to date, emphasising the importance of the event for the network.

She highlighted that INSARAG has developed an online third IGM portal which includes the Canvas Sheet, Exhibition Area, and the Discussion Forums. The Canvas Sheet celebrates the 30 years of INSARAG which allows participants to upload stories, videos and quotes of teams or people important to the network this year. To date, there have been 53 quotes and 60 photos uploaded. The Exhibition Area displays technologies, regional, global, and local projects and participants can offer sessions on specific knowledge or expertise of specific organisational groups. There are currently 17 exhibitors. The Discussion Forums include six different technical spaces for discussion. Participants were encouraged to engage in the interactive platforms that were developed for the network.

Session 5: Closing Statements

INSARAG Unit Head and Global Lead Mr. Winston Chang noted the difficulties of the long and hard 18 months of the global pandemic and reiterated the need to support each other and to adapt. He congratulated and thanked the network for its resilience and commitment and encouraged participants to join the third IGM to commemorate 30 years of INSARAG.