Proposed Terms of Reference

INSARAG Flood Response Working Group

1. **Background**

* The Flexible Response Working Group (FRWG) was established in 2020 following ISG recommendation that the network to discuss and explore the potential for the development of adaptable and flexible response operations, in a global context of constantly changing response environment in which there has been an increase in extreme weather-related disasters requiring other specialized than conventional urban search and rescue activities.
* Following initial discussions, in October 2021 the Warsaw Declaration approved by the INSARAG 3rd Global Meeting, promoted the flexibility of search and rescue teams in their deployments, in an context of increasing intensity and frequency of natural disasters compounded by the climate crisis.
* Also in 2021, INSARAG published its Strategic Plan for the period 2021-2026. In particular, the Strategic Objective 3: Flexible Response, promoted agility and flexibility of rescue teams in response operations across other disaster relief activities, to ensure future sustainability of USAR assets at national and international level and to stay relevant to the needs of the affected people.
* The FRWG was established with three Sub-groups, one of which, the Global Position Sub-Group, composed of 18 experts of all three regions. The Subgroup concluded that the experience and skills built within INSARAG over 30 years have solidified expertise across a range of capabilities that can be applied into other disasters and humanitarian emergencies. Thus, INSARAG can add value in these areas.
* The INSARAG network is preparing for the quinquennial review of the INSARAG Guidelines in 2025, which provides an opportunity to update the INSARAG guidance on preparedness and response, mainly through the review of Volume II, Manual A: Preparedness and Response, and related documents, to ensure that Strategic Objective 3 demonstrates significant progress.
* Considering the objectives already achieved by the FRWG in the development of the flexible response concept, and provided that INSARAG high quality standards and guidelines, effective methodology in coordination and classification and certification are an invaluable asset towards the development of other capabilities and competences to face other type of disasters with high impact, this new working group will focus on one of the disasters with the highest reported frequency, intensity and damage levels worldwide: floods.

1. **Name**

* Flood Response Working Group (FRWG).

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of the Working Group is to contribute to the Strategic Objective of Flexible Response,developed by the INSARAG as part of its Strategic Plan for 2021-2026 addressing flood scenarios that include overflow of water courses, heavy rainfalls, storms, and associated disasters like landslides, in which search and rescue capabilities are needed.

1. **Specific terms of reference and responsibilities**

* To develop an INSARAG broad concept of flood as a generic term including associated hazards such as landslides, overflow of watercourses, excessive rain derived of hurricanes, typhoons or tropical storms.
* To identify existing capabilities, experience, standards, methodologies, processes and legislation of members States or regional organizations on flood response, and to promote the sharing of expertise and good practices amongst countries and organizations.
* To map existing flood response capabilities and experiences of USAR teams –those with USAR classification, those with national accreditation an also other specialized teams- in the three INSARAG regions.
* To establish a Flood Response Directory of INSARAG classified or national USAR teams that already have capabilities that they are prepared to deploy, so as to match them to future international assistance requests.
* To identify the areas of enhancement of the efficiency and effectiveness of frontline emergency response to floods, as well as the mapped capabilities of member states that may contribute to INSARAG methodology and concepts with regards to flexible response.
* To promote capacity building at national and local levels and to strengthen community preparedness for flood response.
* To develop a Technical Guidance Note on Flood Response encompassing the various species aforementioned to contribute to the INSARAG Guidelines review, particularly concerning Volume II, Manual A: Preparedness and Response.
* To develop further guidance for national capacity building in establishing a flood response framework for flood prone member states, according to the methodology outlined in Manual A, that may guide member states in developing national flood response capacities aligned with INSARAG standards and procedures at national and local levels and to foster integration of national and international USAR teams, or specialized teams.

1. **Duration**

* 2 years.

1. **Members**

* This group would consist of 4 active members from each region, whose members must meet the following minimum criteria:
  + USAR Experience (USAR development and training).
  + Experience in operations / USAR coordination.
  + Extensive experience with the INSARAG methodology.
  + Experience with a national accreditation process, and / or with the INSARAG external classification process.
  + Experience in flood response or specific capabilities such as water/mud search, water/mud rescue, vehicle rescue, and also search and rescue in collapsed urban structures provoked by the floods and landslides,
  + Proficient in English language.
* Members must be available to attend in person a minimum of 2 meetings in different regions and be self-funded.
* Each region will present its candidates, which will be selected by the INSARAG Secretariat, in consultation with the Regional Chairs.
* The WG will be led by two co-chairs appointed from this group, and from different regions, and the WG will serve for an initial period of 2 years and supported by the INSARAG Secretariat.

1. **Governance of the working group**

* The WG reports to the INSARAG Steering Group and is required to present progress of its work in the following regional meetings as well as in the Team Leader’s meeting.

1. **Work method**

* Face to face as well as virtual meetings.
* The face-to-face meeting shall coincide with global or regional INSARAG events or meetings.

1. **Products**

The main expected products of this working group will be:

* A Technical Guidance Note on Flood Response to guide capacity building of the member states at national and local level.
* A Register of Existing Flood Response Capabilities of Member States based on the aforementioned Technical Guidance Note.
* Contribution to the revision of the INSARAG Guidelines.