

# INSARAG Governance Review 2024

Jo de Serrano

Patricio Fuentes

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## Glossary

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
AEME	Africa, Europe and the CIS, Middle East and North Africa
AHA	ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CEDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CEPREDENAC	Coordination Center for Disaster Prevention in Central America
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRED	Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EDI	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (also known as DEI)
EM-DAT	The CRED International Disaster Database
ERS	Emergency Response Section
EMT	Emergency Medical Team
EU	European Union
EUCPM	European Union Civil Protection Mechanism
FCDO	UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GA	General Assembly
GCWG	Guidelines Coordination Working Group
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship
GRG	Guidelines Review Group
GSG	Global Steering Group
HERR	The UK Government's Humanitarian Emergency Response Review 2011
HNPW	Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week
HQAI	Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative
IEC	INSARAG External Classification
IER	INSARAG External Reclassification
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Group

IRNAP	INSARAG-Recognised National Accreditation Process
ISG	INSARAG Steering Group
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NAP	National Accreditation Process
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBA	American Firefighters Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODSG	OCHA Donor Support Group
OFP	Operational Focal Point
OSOCC	On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
PFP	Political Focal Point
PSEA	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
RC	Regional Committee
RFP	INSARAG Secretariat Regional Focal Point
ROAP	OCHA Regional Office Asia Pacific (Bangkok)
ROM	Regional Operational Meeting
RTFP	Regional Team Focal Point
RSB	OCHA Response Support Branch
RDC	Reception and Departure Centre
RSB	Response Support Branch
RSG	Regional Steering Group
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound
SO	Strategic Objective
TFP	Team Focal Point
TL	Team Leader
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
Troika	Regional representative body of three people. (Incoming) Vice Chair, Chair and (Outgoing) Vice Chair
UCC	USAR Coordination Cell

UKISAR	UK International Search and Rescue
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
UN	United Nations
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VOSOCC	Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WG	Technical Working Group
WHO	World Health Organisation
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

## Executive Summary

The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was established in 1991 to coordinate urban search and rescue (USAR) teams who make themselves available for deployment to countries experiencing structural collapse, due primarily to earthquakes. The network now comprises over 90 member states and organisations operating under a United Nations (UN) umbrella and badge, in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution (57/150) on “Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance”. As the network has grown, the governance structures that underpin the network have been amended, some formally and some through organic growth such as non-mandated attendance at meetings. The last governance review of the network took place in 2013.

This review showed much progress in improving standards since the INSARAG network was created, within those who predominantly send urban search and rescue (USAR) teams overseas, as well as those who are at risk of collapsed structures due primarily to earthquakes, and who are building, or have built their own capacity to respond. During that time, the humanitarian response system in which the INSARAG network sits has changed, with a focus on localisation and accountability to affected populations coming to the fore. In addition, climate change is affecting both the quantity and severity of emergencies worldwide and there is a risk that urban search and rescue will become less relevant as earthquakes as a percentage of total emergencies declines, with a substantial rise in hydrometeorological events and flooding. The recent Türkiye/Syria earthquake highlighted the challenge of responding to events within complex emergencies and has placed the spotlight on the need for capacity building where the deployment of international teams would be difficult, if not, largely absent. The network is at a critical juncture, needing to decide how it can be most useful within this context, and the report recommends a policy level discussion with key interlocutors from within the network, as well as from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Response Services Branch (RSB) to address this issue before the development of their next Global Strategy.

The standards which underpin humanitarian response have also changed. GA78/199 provides for looking at the world through a diversity lens, which is broadly absent from the INSARAG Guidelines and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) is now a benchmark standard within the humanitarian world to which organisations should seek to measure themselves. In addition, GA57/150, endorsed in 2003, now feels out of date. The fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence are not made explicit within the INSARAG Guidelines. The review makes recommendations as to their inclusion and suggests the network needs to review these in advance of the development of a new Global Strategy.

The role of Global Chair has been undertaken by the Swiss since INSARAG's inception and with a change in representative, a review of whether the network wants to maintain the status quo was suggested. The Swiss are a neutral broker to the network, representing and promoting the network globally. Not many felt that the same support could be offered by an alternative entity and extremely few said they would be able to undertake the role, providing the network with limited choice. Developing the criteria and processes to select or elect a new Global Chair would be challenging and could inject politics into the decision and risk divide. The Swiss are willing and able to continue in the role and so the review recommends that this continues, with the potential of adding a Vice-Chair selected from the Regional Chairs.

The fora in which INSARAG members discuss and decide have become too big and unmanageable and a mix of policy and operational issues make it difficult to afford the right level of discussion to each issue. Representation as legislated for within the INSARAG Guidelines is ignored and Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and Team Focal Points (TFPs) are now sitting alongside the Policy Focal Points (PFPs) without being formally approved to do so. In addition, there is an uneven distribution of voices within meetings, where the number of representatives from the Africa, Europe and the Middle East (AEME) region far outnumber those from the Asia Pacific and Americas regions combined. With no Policy Focal Point to represent their voice, the arguments of non-governmental organisation (NGO) members can go unheard. Stakeholders were unclear at what meetings decisions could be undertaken and the issue of who had decision-making authority and compliance responsibilities were an issue. The review recommended clarity on roles and responsibilities via tightened Terms of Reference (ToRs) and the creation of ToRs for roles not already included within the INSARAG Guidelines, such as the OCHA Regional Focal Points (RFPs) to facilitate an understanding of who does what, to manage expectations on the level of support available and to identify gaps that may need to be filled through other means. Most importantly a change in the structure of the network, as well as inclusive representation and communication flows involved were proposed. The Team Leaders' meeting works well but TFPs lack representation elsewhere in the network. The Global Meeting which occurs every five years does not contribute to the development of the network and what it does can be achieved in the margins of Team Leaders' meetings, through a robust Global Strategy and through regional meeting structures. As such, the review team recommended disbanding the Global Meeting and utilising the resources it takes to finance and staff in an area of the Global Strategy that enables the network to reach its objectives.

The network's three regions are already experiencing a breakaway due to the vast disparities within each region and coherence within regions is problematic. For many, it is not earthquakes that are most prevalent in their region, but hydrometeorological

events exacerbated by climate change. In the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), INSARAG network members have created an Arabic language speaking group, and in the Asia Pacific region, discussion is ongoing regarding the creation of a Pacific group to reflect that the needs of Asia compared to the Small Island Developing States in the Pacific region are vastly different. INSARAG is perceived as an outlier within humanitarian architecture, especially at local level where OCHA Regional Offices, member states and regional organisations identify that earthquake risk is not their greatest concern. However, the network itself did not see the value in splitting the regions more formally, identifying that keeping the three as now ensures solidarity within regions and support from those traditionally sending USAR teams and those who would be recipients of incoming teams. The Troika system used across the network could be improved; identifying candidates to undertake the role with only a short lead time is difficult for network members and a longer lead-time requested. There should also be greater clarity on tasks that all three members of the Troika undertake in progressing the network's aims. This review recommends not to split the current regions, but that OCHA replicates five regions within its staffing structure, providing Asia and the Pacific with one Regional Focal Point each, enabling greater inclusivity, support and participation of member states and working groups within the network.

The working groups, staffed by volunteers from both within and outside the INSARAG network have been a substantial driver of change and progress and their support should be recognised and congratulated. However, they are created in an ad hoc way, and it is unclear how they contribute to the network's overarching aims and they can operate in silos unless working group Chairs communicate across working groups. Some working groups have remained in place for too long. Selecting people to participate in working groups by region, as opposed to skillset is hindering progress and whilst people participate, their contribution can be low, repeatedly placing a lot of the burden on the same people and organisations. Stakeholders identified that it is always the same people and organisations contributing and that there is a difference between attending meetings, speaking at meetings and doing work at the request of the working group chair. The tenure of Chair needs to be upheld. The voluntary nature of the working groups can mean progress is slow and network members highlighted a lack of human resources at all levels. If organisations propose people to participate, they should reflect that it constitutes part of their normal workload and the contribution enshrined in their job descriptions. Ideally people should not be participating in their 'spare' time, enabling a full contribution to the working group as well as ensuring a good work-life balance.

In terms of compliance, the network struggles on how to ensure everybody upholds the INSARAG Guidelines, however this could be semantics, guidelines can be deviated from, but standards need to be met. Can you enforce compliance with guidelines, or should they be the INSARAG Standards? There needs to be tolerance within the network which allows for that not everybody will get it right all the time, especially during deployment and that it is good enough. Failure to comply with the INSARAG Guidelines during deployment does not appear intentional and at times the INSARAG Guidelines make compliance impossible. For example, the provision of classifiers to others for INSARAG External Classification or Reclassification implies a level of English which may not be available within teams and organisations could therefore never be compliant. The network could choose 'hard' punishments such as removal of classified status or 'soft' options, such as continual reinforcement of the

need for compliance. Empowering the INSARAG Secretariat to enforce compliance or establishing a panel of INSARAG peers is problematic; which organisation / member state is willing to penalise another? Instead, the responsibility should be managed within member states or organisations and so the responsibility for this should be strengthened within the INSARAG Guidelines.

In its over 30-year history, there has only been one incidence of the network not reaching consensus and the definition of what consensus differs. The network is not a UN mechanism but one of member states and so they are free to choose their own way to make decisions. However, voting can be divisive and disenfranchising and under UN rules, not secret unless for elections. If rules allow voting, a network member that objects to a proposal runs the risk that others will insist on a vote, which it will lose. The network needs to agree a common definition of consensus. Consensus is endorsed when nobody eligible to vote objects, no threshold should be set, and consensus does not mean 100%. Everybody needs to be able to participate to make decisions and so hybrid meetings need to become the norm. On the rare occasion that consensus cannot be reached, the Global Chair should make the decision on behalf of the INSARAG network following the principles outlined within the INSARAG Guidelines.

The membership process, qualification requirements, roles and responsibilities required to join the INSARAG network are generally quite clear and member states identify that a lack of resources is the predominant factor in not joining the network. Others within the network could not offer direct financial support to others to increase participation, but they could offer in-kind support to build capacity of others, which should be encouraged. Engaging with member states is challenging, due partially to the high turnover of representatives, and it appears that handovers to incoming staff do not take place or do not provide enough guidance on INSARAG. This makes it difficult for the Secretariat to keep track and there is a constant need for awareness raising. A proposed solution is the creation of a quarterly induction programme, to be attended by all new focal points within the network. Countries identified the potential of a buddy system, whereby organisations support under-represented member states and organisations to participate at meetings, facilitate understanding of roles and responsibilities, answer questions that arise and provide guidance on the INSARAG network.

The network has a challenge with gender diversity, which is unsurprising considering that many USAR teams are drawn from the fire and rescue services or military within member states and they are dominated by men. That said, INSARAG stakeholders have said that they are already working towards or can commit to achieving a greater gender balance. The review team noted that current thinking and organisational commitments revolve around equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), not simply gender diversity and inclusion and that EDI seeks to promote fair treatment and full participation of all people, particularly groups who have been historically underrepresented or subject to discrimination on the basis of their identity or disability. General Assembly (GA) Resolution GA78/199 of December 2023, obliges member states to be accountable to affected populations. The INSARAG Guidelines are silent on managing diversity within emergency response and being accountable to the populations they serve. Whilst the primary importance of USAR teams is immediate lifesaving, how those rescued are treated whilst being rescued and afterwards is also important.

One of the key findings of the review was that the current strategy does not include a unifying goal, nor an objective on what the network wants to achieve within its five-year cycle and there are no key performance indicators against which to measure progress. Most projects, initiatives or networks now include a theory of change which enables an objective look at what resources, activities, outputs and outcomes are needed to achieve the desired impact. There needs to be a policy level discussion on where INSARAG wants to be and what impact it wants to make within the current humanitarian context prior to any discussion over what thematic areas should be included. By drafting a theory of change, it will enable the network to identify what resources they can allocate over the five-years and the unfilled gaps that need to be resourced. It will enable the network to be more strategic and less ad hoc in nature which was identified as an issue. Once the theory of change is in place, this will enable the development of implementation plans across the five-year cycle. The network then needs to consider coherence of any proposed new activities that may arise during the five-year period with the overarching objective.

The network structure has become unmanageable, with too many people in meetings, the location of meetings meaning that some are excluded on the basis of cost to attend, and others, such as NGOs not having a voice or representation within meetings at all. In keeping with the localisation agenda, the review team suggested the opportunity for policy discussion by Policy Focal Points be undertaken at the regional level and a vastly smaller Global Steering Group tasked with making decisions of a policy nature and of global concern. The proposed Global Steering Group (GSG) aims to address the imbalance of representation where there are more organisations and member states in the AEME region than in the Asia Pacific or Americas region. The Global Steering Group gives one region one 'vote' each and consensus on what that 'vote' should be is discussed at newly created Regional Committees (RCs) including both PFPs and OFPs who act as the interlocutor and advisor to the PFPs. Regional Operational Meetings (ROMs) discuss operational issues only and propose regional representation through one TFP per region who represents all the Team Leaders in their region. To address the perceived silos in which working groups operate and to ensure coherence with the Global Strategy, the team proposes to disband the Guidelines Review Group and the creation of a Guidelines Coordination Working Group (GCWG).

The INSARAG network achieves a substantial amount with limited resources, but it could be more than just a sum of its parts. A review of what USAR means within the current humanitarian context is required in order to inform a meaningful Global Strategy and a theory of change should be developed to identify all activities, resources, outputs and outcomes required to meet its objectives and maximise impact. Resources are scarce and identifying resource requirements in advance will help potential supporters to fill those appropriately. A new network structure will underpin INSARAG's work, enabling it to achieve more and ensure better representation and inclusivity. Localisation is happening organically, but members need to consider what localisation means including what emergency types are most prevalent in each region and need addressing, and is it better to have fewer USAR teams based predominantly in Europe meeting 100% of the INSARAG guidelines or many more USAR teams in those areas vulnerable to earthquakes achieving 80% of the requirements. Helping to build the domestic capacity of those member states prone to earthquakes would make a significant contribution towards USAR localisation.



## Methodology

The study was undertaken through a review of 96 documents, developed by INSARAG at global level and at regional level and a 75-question questionnaire was distributed to 250 INSARAG Policy Focal Points (PFPs), Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and Team Leaders (TLs), encompassing representatives across the INSARAG network<sup>1</sup>. The survey was open to responses for over two weeks and of the 250 to which the survey was sent, we received 78 responses implying a return rate of 31%. Of these, 46 were from the AEME region, 18 from the Asia Pacific region and 14 from the Americas region. There are substantially more INSARAG network members in the AEME region than any other region. Not all questions were compulsory and therefore respondents were able to skip questions and for many of the questions, respondents were allowed to select more than one response. At least one member state responded only once to the questionnaire, instead of individuals across all recipient types (PFP, OFP, TL) submitting their own response, as was envisaged. On at least one occasion, a member states' OFP submitted two responses, one for the OFP and one for the PFP. Both these will have prevented the review team from being able to disaggregate their responses, resulting in a limitation to the survey data but not one it felt was too significant. Where necessary, the review team disaggregated responses to demonstrate the responses of PFPs only, PFPs being the only representative eligible to make decisions. In addition, where the review team felt there was a regional aspect to the question, the review team were able to differentiate between five regions, corresponding to the regions managed by the Regional Focal Points (RFPs).

In addition, the team created a survey specifically for the Africa region as it was felt that the main survey would be too cumbersome for a region which is broadly inactive in the INSARAG network. This survey was sent to 105 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Focal Points within the Africa region to ask about impediments to being part of the INSARAG network; 14 responded giving a return rate of 13% and so the sample size was too small to be definitive.

Following on from the literature review and survey, the team undertook 49 key informant, semi-structured interviews with PFPs, OFPs, Working Group Chairs, OCHA staff, NGO members, regional organisation staff, Troika members and others who have been and still are active in the INSARAG network. The KIIs were intended to enrich the information provided through the literature review and survey. Where some key informants were unable to attend an interview in person, they submitted their response in writing.

## Background

The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was established in 1991 based on experience from the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams who responded to the Mexican earthquake of 1985 and the Armenian earthquake of 1988. The group was created within the framework of existing United Nations (UN) humanitarian coordination but is not a UN mechanism, but a network of over 90 member states and organisations operating under a UN umbrella and badge, in accordance with UN General Assembly (GA) Resolution (57/150) on "Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance". INSARAG's

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<sup>1</sup> Americas - PFP 15 / OFP 18 / TL 5 (total 38), AEME - PFP 53 / OFP 58 / TL 51 (total 162) and Asia Pacific – PFP 16 / OFP 16 / TL 18 (total 50).

primary purpose is to coordinate USAR teams who make themselves available for deployment to countries experiencing structural collapse due primarily to earthquakes. In between USAR response, the network works to improve standards and facilitating interoperability, details of which can be found in the INSARAG Guidelines.

## Is INSARAG fit for purpose, fit for the future?

In its over 30-year history, the INSARAG network has grown from a small number of countries with domestic USAR capacity being utilised to deploy overseas in bilateral cooperation and support to countries affected by earthquakes, to a network of over 90 organisations, including member states, NGOs and international organisations, comprising both sending and receiving USAR teams within a recognised system of standards and interoperability. Being part of the INSARAG network and following the INSARAG Guidelines ensures that both sending and receiving countries can operate effectively and efficiently without the need to identify ways of working for each new emergency.

During this same period, the humanitarian system has also been developing, with new thematic areas and response tools developed to provide a more coordinated and effective response in support of people affected by emergencies. The World Humanitarian Summit of 2016 significantly altered the direction of emergency response towards a localisation agenda, through its statement that humanitarian response should be ‘as local as possible, as international as necessary’. In addition, the humanitarian system is struggling to keep pace with the demand on its resources, which will be exacerbated even further due to climate change increasing the frequency and severity of hydrometeorological disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts. The Global Humanitarian Overview 2024 highlights that there was \$4billion less funding available in 2023 than in 2022 and that the funding gap was the highest it has ever been.

### Localisation

During the past 30 years, the international deployment element of USAR within the network has grown, and there is a stronger focus on domestic capacity first, then international. The COVID-19 emergency highlighted the weakness of a system that could not deploy due to the travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 emergency. Should a major earthquake have occurred requiring the deployment of international teams during that time, it was clear that this could not have happened to the scale required, again putting more weight on building national capacity first. Countries should always first ensure they have sufficient capacity for domestic response and can seek accreditation through their own National Accreditation Process (NAP) affording them “Nationally Accredited USAR Team” status with the INSARAG Secretariat. Teams that wish to consider accreditation against INSARAG standards can either apply to become an INSARAG Recognised Nationally Accredited USAR Team (IRNAP) or undertake an INSARAG External Classification (IEC). The standards needed to obtain either of these certifications are the same with a few exceptions, notably the need for each team to hold passport details for team members, however there is much less demand for an IRNAP, where IEC, coordinated by the INSARAG network is seen as the gold standard. This unfair perception that IEC is worth more than IRNAP status, combined with a backlog in IECs due to the COVID-19 emergency preventing any classifications or reclassifications (IER), as well as just as the shortage of classifiers is creating intense pressure on the classification and reclassification

system, for the 2024/2025 period alone, there are already 27 teams with their respective scheduled exercises.

**Recommendation 1:** All teams within the INSARAG network should first achieve INSARAG Recognised Nationally Accredited (IRNAP) status before being permitted to join the IEC system. The Troika in each region should facilitate discussion on whether intra-regional deployments of IRNAP teams are acceptable for their region. If that is agreed, then teams who will only deploy within their own region will not require an IEC. Countries with teams mandated to deploy outside their region are strongly encouraged to undergo the IEC.

INSARAG members need to consider whether it is better to have fewer teams, based predominantly in the Europe region meeting 100% of the INSARAG standards or whether it is better for many more teams based in countries vulnerable to earthquakes to achieve 80% of the standards. Building the capacity of countries who are unable to find the resources themselves should be an integral part of the INSARAG network. Many organisations involved with USAR are already undertaking capacity building initiatives in other countries, such as the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) in Malawi and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in the Americas, however the decision on which country to support is not based on evidence of potential need, but on who knows who, direct requests for support, political priorities, bilateral agreements etc.

**Recommendation 2:** The INSARAG Secretariat to map global USAR capacity to identify gaps and agree on priority countries with the INSARAG network. The network to advocate for support through either traditional donor funding via a capacity building programme / project or through an enhanced mentorship system between USAR teams.

## Complex Emergencies

The Türkiye / Syria earthquake of February 2023, vast in nature, highlighted the inconsistencies of USAR deployments with over 93 teams deploying to Türkiye and only a handful of teams deploying to Syria, due to it being in active conflict. The Türkiye / Syria response highlighted the need to address the issue of countries or locations within countries at risk of earthquakes and where deployment of international teams to undertake USAR operations is less likely, due to duty of care obligations of sending entities.

Countries are exercising their sovereignty more than ever before, and in some locations, certain USAR teams are more likely to be accepted than others, due to geographical location, diplomatic relationships, foreign policy etc. Countries who could deploy to an affected area will be managing the risk of deployments, whether their teams are adequately skilled to operate in those contexts and the unique capacity they would bring to the response as part of their bilateral relationship with the affected country. Some locations are outside sovereign government control, for example, regions where non-state armed groups are operating in place of government, and this adds further complexity to a deploying entity's decision-making.

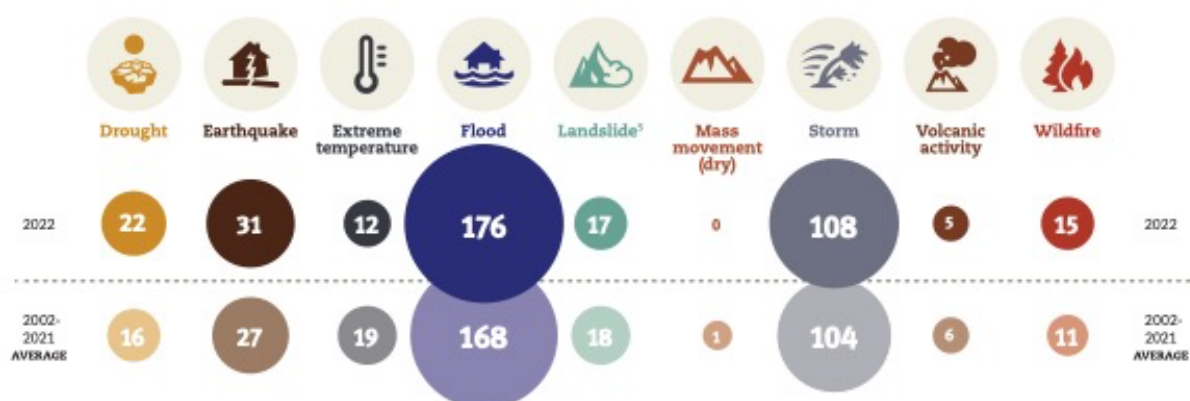
**Recommendation 3:** the INSARAG Secretariat to undertake a mapping of vulnerable countries and to work with donors and the INSARAG network to develop a capacity building programme targeting the most vulnerable countries. The mapping should identify USAR teams which could deploy to these locations. The network can also identify which teams can and will deploy to these places in a major disaster.

## Climate Change

Over the past five years, the INSARAG network has grappled with finding its position vis-à-vis the increasing quantity and severity of hydrometeorological disasters due to climate change. According to the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)'s 2023 report entitled Disasters in Numbers 2022<sup>2</sup>, there were 387 disasters recorded in 2022, of which earthquakes accounted for 31 (8%) of the total. By far the biggest number of disasters were floods (176, 46%) and storms (108, 28%). The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) documented “a dramatic rise in the proportion of annual disasters attributable to climate and extreme weather, from 76% in the 2000s to 83% in the 2010s. That trend continued in 2020 and 2021, with 91% of the disasters recorded in the EM-DAT database of disasters attributable to climate and extreme weather.”<sup>3</sup>

The IFRC report highlighted a growth in multi-hazard emergencies, where an emergency triggers a different type of emergency e.g. floods and health or where different emergency types occur in quick succession. The IFRC highlighted the need for integrated systems for multi-hazard preparedness and that “teams of responders that are only trained to respond to a coronavirus outbreak or a tsunami will not be able to cope. Instead, teams must have a broad mix of skills. Specialists and experts are still essential, but they must learn to work in integrated teams. Building such teams requires **trust** and **equity**: members must respect each other’s skillsets. Such integration needs to occur at the national, local and organisational levels.”

The INSARAG methodology has been incredibly successful in fostering coordinated and quality response to collapsed structure emergencies. Out of INSARAG, the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) methodology was born, as well as the Emergency Medical Teams Initiative (EMT), which utilised the INSARAG experience of over 20 years to inform its development. There is, however, no international methodology for flood rescue<sup>4</sup>. The creation of a Flexible Response Working Group, which led to the creation of the Flood Response Working Group is a step towards addressing the growing need that climate change will entail.



<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cred.be/sites/default/files/2022\\_EMDAT\\_report.pdf](https://www.cred.be/sites/default/files/2022_EMDAT_report.pdf) EM-DAT - International Disaster Database

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/2022\\_IFRC-WDR\\_EN.0.pdf.pdf](https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/2022_IFRC-WDR_EN.0.pdf.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> We use the term flood rescue as opposed to flood response which includes areas such as water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection, livelihoods etc.

Source: Disasters in Numbers 2022 CRED / UNDRR

United States Geological Survey (USGS) records since about 1900, expect about 16 major earthquakes in any given year, 15 at seven and above and one earthquake of magnitude eight or higher. In the past 40-50 years, USGS records show that we have exceeded the long-term average number of major earthquakes about twelve times.<sup>5</sup> This does not therefore point to growth in the number of large earthquakes in real terms, however the percentage of earthquakes as a share of the overall number of emergencies will decrease. The Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023, by Development Initiatives notes that the funding gap for emergencies is growing. Donors are already making tough decisions on funding, for example, the Ukraine conflict is eating into many donors' budgets, and many have diverted funds from elsewhere. Donors will be forced to make tough funding decisions which have the potential to reduce funding for USAR response to increase spending in other areas. Maintaining INSARAG's relevance within this context is important. Some network members see expansion into flood rescue methodology as a potential dilution of USAR standards, however, this may occur naturally through time as donors shift their focus elsewhere.

A mindset shift is needed, in that expansion into flood rescue is not a detractor from USAR standards but a demonstration of the utility of a methodology like INSARAG's, as evidenced by both UNDAC and the EMT Initiative, within other areas of response. Within the network, there is a notable divide, as EU institutions already have this capacity as part of the European Union (EU) Civil Protection Mechanism's (EUCPM) modules, which include not only search and rescue modules, but modules in flood containment and flood rescue using boats.<sup>6</sup> Other member states, have also expressed concern about expansion into flood rescue methodology.

INSARAG member states, predominantly in the Global South, corresponding to the Africa, Asia, Pacific and Latin America regions within the INSARAG network identify that hydrometeorological emergencies are more prevalent within their region, making the argument for a methodology for flood rescue. Both the survey data and key informant interviews highlight that financing the development and maintenance of USAR teams, as well as participation in the INSARAG network is a challenge for many. Where resources are scarce, the economics of demand and supply may kick in and INSARAG for USAR may see its share decrease as member states shift their focus to that of flood rescue.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the INSARAG network is perceived to be dominated by a few member states and this appears to have been the case in the discussions surrounding the potential expansion into other areas. Despite the evidence pointing to a growing need for a flood rescue methodology as climate change exacerbates hydrometeorological emergencies, the shift towards this area is slow. There is an absence of discussion at a policy level around the position of USAR and INSARAG

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/why-are-we-having-so-many-earthquakes-has-naturally-occurring-earthquake-activity-been>

<sup>6</sup> Commission Implementing Decision of 16 October 2014 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No 1313/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism and repealing Commission Decisions 2004/277/EC, Euratom and 2007/606/EC, Euratom (notified under document C(2014) 7489) (Text with EEA relevance) (2014/762/EU) Accessed: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32014D0762> 14/03/23

within the broader humanitarian system, increasing emergencies due to climate change and a growing funding gap.

**Recommendation 4:** Prior to developing the INSARAG strategy for 2025 – 2030, there should be discussion at a policy level on the position of INSARAG/USAR within the broader humanitarian context, its impact in relation to growing hydrometeorological emergencies and the localisation agenda. Further information and clarification on this recommendation can be found within the [Global Strategy 2025-2030 Section](#).

## Values, Operational Norms and Humanitarian Principles

Alongside the development of tools for emergency response over the past 30 years, the standards which guide humanitarian effort have also developed. Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines states that INSARAG operates in accordance with the Humanitarian Principles, which form the core of humanitarian action. The INSARAG standards are.

**“Adherence to common standards and methodology:** Members of INSARAG commit to adhere to the INSARAG Guidelines and methodology as globally accepted and independently verifiable minimum operational standards and procedures, based upon expert knowledge and evidence-based experience. The INSARAG network continues to develop these standards and procedures through shared and continued learning.

**Inclusiveness:** INSARAG brings together governments, governmental organisations, NGOs and disaster preparedness and response professionals. INSARAG particularly encourages disaster-prone countries to join the network, as well as any country or organisation with USAR response capacity. INSARAG emphasises the importance for gender awareness and considerations while working in disaster-affected areas.

**Professionalism:** INSARAG promotes responsible, ethical and professional standards amongst USAR Teams and stakeholders.

**Respect for diversity:** INSARAG acknowledges and respects USAR Teams’ varied operational procedures in achieving common objectives, while disseminating principles and minimum standards agreed upon by the INSARAG network.

**Cultural sensitivity:** INSARAG promotes awareness and respect by international USAR Teams of cultural differences so that international USAR Teams can cooperate more effectively with national and international actors.

**Needs-driven:** Mobilisation and deployment of international USAR Teams is only supported when the affected country’s capacities are overwhelmed by the impact of a collapsed-structure emergency and national authorities agree to accept international assistance. Moreover, the type of international assistance rendered is based on the needs of the affected country and not driven by the availability of resources.

**Coordination:** INSARAG promotes internationally agreed coordination structures managed and advocated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), promotes coordination of preparedness and capacity building activities, and, throughout an operation, assists Member States and affected countries in coordinating the emergency response.

**Predictability:** INSARAG promotes predictability in search and rescue response operations, both in terms of response capacities available when they are needed, as

well as in terms of coordination platforms put in place to ensure a most efficient use of available assets in relation to the identified humanitarian needs.”

These INSARAG principles were developed at some point between the 2012 and 2015 editions of the INSARAG Guidelines. They do not directly map onto the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, which are as follows.

“Humanity: Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.

Neutrality; Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature

Impartiality: Humanitarian action must be carried out on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no adverse distinction on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, class or political opinion.

Independence: Humanitarian action must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented.”

The fundamental principles, developed from international humanitarian law, are part of the United Nations through General Assembly Resolutions 46/182 and 58/114. In addition, these principles form the basis of many other recognised codes of conduct and humanitarian standards and principles, such as the Red Cross / Red Crescent Code of Conduct and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). Three of the four fundamental principles are included within GA57/150, those of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, but that of independence is missing, presumably as member states can never be entirely independent. Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines does not make adherence to the four fundamental principles explicit. Survey respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the four fundamental principles were applicable to INSARAG.

**Recommendation 5:** Include the humanitarian principles and their definition in full within Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines, to clarify the difference between the four fundamental humanitarian principles and the values, principles and operational norms developed by the INSARAG community with specific reference to INSARAG and USAR operations.

The prevailing standard that underpins all humanitarian action at present is the CHS. This standard includes nine commitments which organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide, and it includes the fundamental humanitarian principles at its core. Organisations can use it as a voluntary code with which to align their own internal procedures and it can also be used as a basis for verification of performance, through the Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative (HQAI)<sup>7</sup>.

The revised 2024 edition states that “People and communities in situations of crisis and vulnerability:

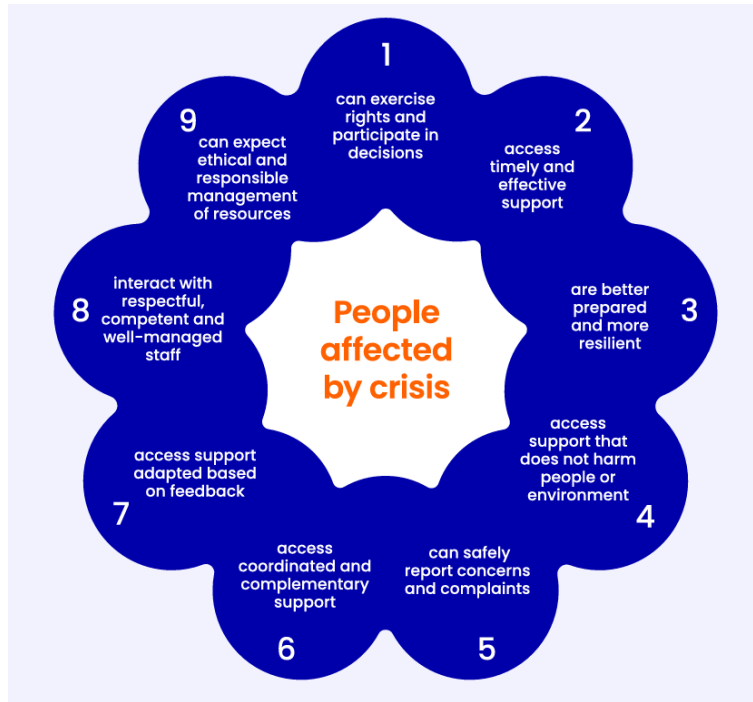
1. Can exercise their rights and participate in actions and decisions that affect them.
2. Access timely and effective support in accordance with their specific needs and priorities.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/Core%20Humanitarian%20Standard%20-%20English.pdf>



3. Are better prepared and more resilient to potential crises.
4. Access support that does not cause harm to people or the environment.
5. Can safely report concerns and complaints and get them addressed.
6. Access coordinated and complementary support.
7. Access support that is continually adapted and improved based on feedback and learning.
8. Interact with staff and volunteers that are respectful, competent and well-managed.
9. Can expect that resources are managed ethically and responsibly.



Source: Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability 2024<sup>8</sup>

The INSARAG network cannot seek certification of performance against the CHS Standard via the HQAI but individual organisations can; the commitments are essential elements of principled, accountable, and high-quality humanitarian action which all organisations working in the humanitarian sphere should work towards.

**Recommendation 6:** INSARAG network organisations review the CHS against their own ways of working and their application within the INSARAG network as part of the new strategy.

In December 2023, General Assembly Resolution GA78/199<sup>9</sup> on the Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights was adopted by member states providing for “strengthening the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations for the benefit of all human beings” and “urges all actors on the international scene to build an international order based on inclusion, justice, equality and equity, human dignity, mutual understanding and promotion of and respect for cultural diversity and universal human rights and to reject all doctrines of exclusion based on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance;” This resolution can be framed alongside the CHS and the need to be accountable to affected populations, which gained prominence at the World Humanitarian Summit

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/uq/d/e57c40\\_f8ca250a7bd04282b4f2e4e810daf5fc.pdf](https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/uq/d/e57c40_f8ca250a7bd04282b4f2e4e810daf5fc.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/423/86/pdf/n2342386.pdf?token=rUuPmZM0SdxwkhnyjO&fe=true>



(WHS) as part of the Participation Revolution which in the INSARAG network implies those in need of rescue from collapsed structures and their families / communities. The INSARAG Guidelines are silent on managing diversity within emergency response and being accountable to the populations they serve. Whilst the primary importance of USAR teams is immediate lifesaving, how those rescued are treated whilst being rescued and afterwards is also important. A good example of this would be in the development of the Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs) and the recognition that whilst being rescued from within collapsed structures saves lives, preventing lifelong injuries such as amputations as a result was vitally important to their quality of life and prospects.

**Recommendation 7:** The INSARAG network to consider how this GA Resolution applies to their work, for example, gender-responsive approaches, strengthening Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, supporting those with disabilities, either visible or invisible or those from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQIA+) communities, such as transgender people and to investigate the potential for training within these areas.

## Leadership and Governance

Switzerland has undertaken the role of Global Chair since 1991, representing the INSARAG network, promoting the INSARAG methodology and INSARAG Guidelines, leading on advocacy, coordinating, participating, and chairing meetings. The previous governance review of 2013 had proposed that the Global Chair should remain in post for a period of four years with the potential for two further re-elections and this was accepted at the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG), however, this is not reflected within Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines and the reason for the omission is unclear. This role, first undertaken by Ambassador Toni Frisch until 2015, then Ambassador Manuel Bessler until 2023 is seen as a neutral and honest broker within the INSARAG network. With Manuel Bessler’s retirement, his replacement, Ambassador Dominik Stillhart saw an opportunity to review whether the Swiss Government should continue in this role or whether other options for the Global Chair exist.

When asked, the Swiss stated:

- they are happy to stay as Global Chair if the network agrees and they do not wish to impose themselves on the network
- they wanted to ask the network about whether they wanted diversification of the role
- they wanted to ensure the Global Chair fits with regional needs
- that it might be good to have a Global Chair from a country who is a recipient of international USAR capacity
- that if they were not to continue as Global Chair, this would not impact on their funding to either OCHA or to INSARAG activities

To that end, the survey posed questions regarding their satisfaction in the Swiss as Global Chair, the results demonstrating that a significant majority are content with the Swiss undertaking this role.

Option	Answers	Percentage
Very satisfied	41	57%
Satisfied	20	27%

Neutral/Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11	15%
Dissatisfied	1	1%
Very dissatisfied	0	0%

When this was disaggregated to the responses of only those who could vote, i.e. the Policy Focal Points, the picture was broadly similar.

Option	Answers	Percentage
Very satisfied	14	58%
Satisfied	4	17%
Neutral/Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5	21%
Dissatisfied	1	4%
Very dissatisfied	0	0%

Of all PFPs who responded to this question, only one of the 24 was dissatisfied with the status quo and overall, only one of 73 respondents to this question was dissatisfied. No respondent indicated that they were very dissatisfied with the Swiss undertaking the role of Global Chair. However, the INSARAG network is currently based on decisions by consensus and therefore despite the extremely low dissatisfaction rate, it is possible that when the issue of the Global Chair is raised at the next ISG meeting, an objection may be raised. Therefore, it is worthwhile exploring the survey responses further as they feed into the challenges of how the Swiss not undertaking this role would need to be overcome, such as the need to ensure neutrality, the selection process, how long terms should be and how many terms Global Chairs should be in post.

Of those who were dissatisfied with the Swiss as Global Chair, 14 believed the role should rotate, 12 said the role should not rotate and 29 respondents answered that the Swiss should remain as Global Chair. Of those who provided comments, responses highlighted that a rotation of Global Chair role may provide diversity and strengthen engagement within the network and that the role of Global Chair should not be an exclusive right for any member state. Other responses pointed to the challenge of having a rotating Global Chair and Troika which may make the system unsustainable. Once non-PFPs were removed from the data, five said it should rotate, four said it shouldn't rotate, four said don't know and six said the Swiss should remain as Global Chair. The survey data points to no clear answer from respondents on whether the Global Chair role should rotate.

We asked the question that if the role did not rotate. whether the Global Chair should be elected by member states.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Not Applicable - the Swiss should remain as Global Chair	32	47%
Yes	12	17%
Don't know	9	13%
Other	9	13%

No	7	10%
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When all except PFP responses were removed from the data, five said yes to election by member states, zero said no, one said don't know, nine said the Swiss should remain as Global Chair and six said other and provided comments. Comments on this question pointed to respondents not being dissatisfied with the current system but that if the Swiss did not continue, selection should be undertaken through an election procedure which ensures neutrality. Other comments included not having a Global Chair at all.

The survey data was unclear in how a new Global Chair should be selected if the position rotates.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Not Applicable - the Swiss should remain as Global Chair	34	46%
Vote by Policy Focal Points	10	14%
Consensus of Policy Focal Points at the ISG	9	12%
Vote by Regional Chairs	9	12%
Rotates around Regional Chairs	8	11%
The role should not rotate.	4	5%

When this was stripped back to the 8 PFPs who responded to this question, the answers were as follows.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Not Applicable - the Swiss should remain as Global Chair	5	26%
Vote by Policy Focal Points	5	26%
Consensus of Policy Focal Points at the ISG	2	11%
Vote by Regional Chairs	3	16%
Rotates around Regional Chairs	4	21%
The role should not rotate.	0	0%

Comments on this question highlighted that any candidate for the role of Global Chair should be selected against agreed criteria, that they should be selected at high level or by vote.

There are comparisons to be made with similar networks which could be useful here. For example, the Global Chair for the Emergency Medical Teams (EMT) is selected by the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Director General and something similar could be put in place for the INSARAG network, with the decision being made by somebody within OCHA, for example, the INSARAG Secretary, Chief of the Response Services Branch or the Under-Secretary General. It should be noted that no discussion has been undertaken with OCHA to confirm whether they would be willing or able to undertake the role.

When the question of neutrality was raised, 30% believed that the role requires neutrality, but they were unclear how this should be achieved. Comments included the following themes:

- applicants are representatives of INSARAG, not their member state and so neutrality must be preserved in this way
- The establishment of a terms of reference with clear and transparent criteria for selection for the role and a transparent selection process to foster neutrality
- Neutrality cannot be assured
- The UN in this post could ensure neutrality
- That changing the Global Chair could politicise the system and be difficult to maintain
- That the role is performance managed to ensure neutrality
- That the role of Global Chair could not be undertaken by a representative from a country actively involved in a conflict, either internal or external
- That decision on the Global Chair is undertaken by the Regional Chairs

When asked if any member state could undertake the role of Global Chair without the need for additional financial or human resources, only two PFPs responded favourably, both from within the AEME region. Of those, one also stated that if the Swiss do not continue as Global Chair, then the role should be discontinued indicating that whilst they could undertake the role, their preference would be for the Swiss to remain as Global Chair. Based on the survey data, the number of candidates who would be able and willing to take on the role is therefore very small, and the network would have extremely limited choice.

To provide further clarity on the role, discussions with the Swiss Government point to the facilitation required, such as briefings, speeches, meeting arrangements etc. estimating support to the Global Chair in the region of two to three full weeks' work per year. The Global Chair is expected to attend meetings globally, including regional meetings, Team Leaders meeting, the Global meeting etc. most often accompanied by the Operational Focal Point, which adds an additional human resource and financial burden to the position.

The survey did not disaggregate to establish whether limiting factors were human resource related through the provision of ambassador / high level attendance at meetings, the financial, or neutrality aspect of the role. However, we already know that the INSARAG network struggles to find human and financial resources needed to manage the system and that in an ideal world, more resources are needed. As the Swiss have been supporting this role for many years, we asked whether there is potential for the Swiss government to financially support another member state to undertake this role and they agreed that this is something to look into and that it would depend on costs. This is not guaranteed. As with many donors at present, the sheer quantity and scale of emergencies currently ongoing means resources are limited.

There does not seem to be a clear way to fulfilling the resource and neutrality aspect of the role of Global Chair. There are options to fill this position, however none of them are easy, would require substantial input in terms of finances and human resources which are not yet secured, and robust criteria would need to be developed to support any application / selection process, which could also be perceived as a political exercise. With extreme low dissatisfaction as evidenced in the survey, the network

needs to reflect on whether changing the role of Global Chair at this time is important to the functioning of the network.

**Recommendation 8:** Keep the Swiss as Global Chair and strengthen the role of Regional Chairs more to guide the INSARAG network. This could be achieved through better communication between the Global Chair and Regional Chairs, or the creation of a Vice-Chair position chosen from within the Regional Chairs. The current new year and mid-year calls are more of an information sharing forum, rather than grouping working towards meeting INSARAG's aims and there needs to be a greater focus on driving change at regional level.

## Criteria, Tenure, and Terms of Reference (TORs) of Focal Points

Through analysis of the survey data, it is clear that the boundaries between PFP and OFP are blurred, and network members often lack the staff to support participation of two representatives and / or to finance travel, accommodation and subsistence for more than one person to INSARAG meetings. Network members may have one person undertaking both roles or no fixed people undertaking either role and PFPs and OFPs change frequently, often without notification to the INSARAG Secretariat, or handover to the next representative. This impacts on institutional memory and continuity for the network.

The INSARAG Guidelines aim not to be too prescriptive on how member states participate in the network, as each organisation has different resource levels, however it is clear that whether there are one or two representatives from a member state, the links between policy and operational are vital and that often it is a challenge to ensure PFPs fully understand the intricacies of the network and for OFPs and TFPs to understand the higher level policy objectives of member states. In the Latin America region, some member states have identified a ministerial level person as PFP, and the perception is that this is too high level to be able to understand INSARAG and USAR. PFPs and OFPs do not uniformly read Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines to understand what is expected from their role within the network and communications between PFP, OFP and TFP need to be effective.

For some Policy Focal Points, especially those from within development and humanitarian cooperation ministries, USAR is a high cost, infrequently used tool in a range of tools, mechanisms and services utilised in emergency response. Several member states have undertaken studies regarding the impact of USAR within a broader humanitarian system, reaching the conclusion that in terms of lives saved compared to other interventions, the impact of USAR is low but that it fills a need for visible bilateral cooperation between member states and should be maintained. Others reached the conclusion that the focus for their USAR teams should be domestic first and often, the responsibility for domestic, as opposed to international USAR capacity rests with other ministries or departments. For example, in the United Kingdom (UK), the responsibility for USAR within the UK rests with the Home Office, not the FCDO which manages USAR for international response or the Cabinet Office which held the relationship with the European Civil Protection Mechanism, prior to Brexit.

Where a PFP comes from within national civil protection organisations, their focus is generally different as it comes most often from a base of domestic first, then international second. Where the need for USAR is greater due to the level of vulnerability to earthquakes, the importance of tools provided domestically by member

states for their own citizens and residents elevates its importance in saving lives. Member states have the foremost responsibility for protecting their populations. In the European Union, an additional level of protection is afforded to EU member states and 10 participating states<sup>10</sup> through the EUCPM and EU modules including modules for heavy and medium USAR response.

OFPs highlight that it is difficult for them to ensure that the PFP has enough information for them to make an informed decision at the ISG. Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines indicates that neither the OFP nor TFP are invited to participate in the ISG unless they have been delegated by their PFP to attend in their place. However, the reality is that OFPs have been attending the ISG for many years to advise their PFPs in real time of the issues being discussed. TFPs are also attending the ISG, again without formal invitation.

Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines refers to Team Focal Points and Team Leaders interchangeably but they are different and therefore Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines should be amended. The TFP is the contact to their national PFP and OFP, as well as to the Chair and the INSARAG Secretariat. The challenge with this is that the INSARAG Guidelines seem to fit better with governmental teams, not NGO teams, who are not bound by any relationship with the government department. At the point of joining the network, governmental focal points are asked to endorse the application of national teams for INSARAG membership. NGO teams identify that despite them being non-governmental teams, the INSARAG Secretariat asks for endorsement by PFPs and OFPs of NGO team members attending meetings and undertaking courses. Government representatives should not have decision-making power over NGO teams within the INSARAG network which meet the same standards as governmental teams. Fair access to meetings and courses should be given to all INSARAG member organisations.

**Recommendation 10:** Quarterly inductions by RFPs for new focal points / stakeholders – Policy, Operational, Team, WG Chairs / Vice Chairs, Regional Chairs / Vice Chairs etc. To include information on their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the network, expectations on participation and contribution etc.

**Recommendation 11:** After the initial endorsement by the PFP of participation of NGO teams within the INSARAG network, responsibility for decisions on attending meetings and courses or undertaking an IEC/IER should be defined by the Secretariat in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines and ensuring fair representation of all INSARAG members.

## Policy Focal Point (PFP)

Currently, the ToRs for the PFP from Volume 1 are as follows;

- act as focal point on INSARAG policy matters of the government to the INSARAG network, including the Secretariat in OCHA, the respective Regional Group and Chair as well as the ISG and the Global Chair

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<sup>10</sup> Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Türkiye, and Ukraine. [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism\\_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European,preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters.](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en#:~:text=In%20October%202001%2C%20the%20European,preparedness%2C%20and%20response%20to%20disasters.)

- act as point-of-contact for all national USAR Teams – including NGO teams – on INSARAG matters, and be able to endorse the application of national USAR Teams for IECs
- ensure the promotion and implementation of INSARAG Guidelines and methodology as part of the national disaster management plan and for the national and international response of the Member State’s USAR Teams as defined in UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance”
- ensure that relevant information is communicated in a timely manner in times of emergencies to the INSARAG network through the INSARAG Secretariat and/or the relevant channels (i.e. the VOSOCC), including on request or acceptance of international assistance
- represent or ensure representation of the own Member State at meetings of the respective INSARAG Regional Group, and if applicable the ISG

These are high level and therefore we asked network members for further responsibilities the role entails and activities that should be undertaken. Survey respondents identified the following areas for inclusion:

- that only PFPs can take decisions or endorse at INSARAG meetings where policy / financial impact decisions are required
- that they can delegate decision making authority where necessary
- PFPs need policy and / or financial decision-making authority, able to make decisions during meetings based on either their own direct authority or through prior ministerial/high level approval of budgets, USAR strategy etc
- that they should reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines
- to liaise with both the OFP and TFP on issues pertaining to USAR response and the INSARAG network

Due to the level of PFPs within member states, this review proposes that it is not appropriate for the PFP to liaise with TFPs, and that the operational relationship should always be OFP to TFP.

**Recommendation 12:** Add points above to the PFP Terms of Reference, removing the need to liaise with the TFP.

### Operational Focal Point (OFP)

Currently, the ToRs for the OFP from Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines are as follows;

- act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for national USAR Teams within the Member State and promote the capacity building of the teams and national disaster management structure in line with INSARAG Guidelines and methodology, including the preparation for the establishment of RDC<sup>11</sup> and OSOCC<sup>12</sup> when required
- when affected by an emergency of international significance within the own Member State, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide

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<sup>11</sup> Reception and Departure Centre

<sup>12</sup> On-Site Operations Coordination Centre

relevant information updates for the international operation in regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC<sup>13</sup>

- when responding to an emergency in a third country, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide relevant information updates on the own Member State's planned or implemented response in regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC/OSOCC

Again, these are high level and therefore we asked network members for further responsibilities the role entails and activities that should be undertaken. Survey respondents identified the following areas for inclusion:

- advise PFP on issues that have policy / financial impact
- ensure their own oversight and participation in the development of regional projects e.g. related to USAR national capacity building such as IRNAP
- that they should reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines
- to liaise with both the PFP and TFP from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR response, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives

These work for governmental relationships but provide challenges for the governmental and NGO USAR team relationship. Therefore, we suggest amending as follows:

- liaise with and advise PFP on USAR and INSARAG issues that have policy / financial impact.
- participate in and have oversight of the development of national and regional projects e.g. related to USAR national capacity building such as IRNAP.
- reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines.
- liaise with TFPs from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR response including changes to the standards, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives at least once annually.

Further recommendations on the responsibilities of the OFP can be found in the Network Structure Section below.

### Team Focal Point (TFP) / Team Leader (TL)

Currently, the ToRs for the TFP from Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines are as follows:

- act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for his USAR Team. They are the contact to their national focal points (Policy and Operational), to the regional Chair as well to the INSARAG Secretariat
- they are responsible to promote and ensure the INSARAG methodology and minimal standards in preparedness and response within his team
- they are responsible to update the USAR directory of their teams

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<sup>13</sup> Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre



Again, these are high level and therefore we asked network members for further responsibilities the role entails and activities that should be undertaken. Survey respondents identified the following areas for inclusion:

- be accountable to their OFF, PFP and the INSARAG Secretariat for their team's compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines
- ensure any decisions undertaken are within the authority provided to them by their OFF / PFP
- that both the PFP and OFF consult or take advice from the TFP when decisions have to be made that affect the standard of the USAR IEC/IER team or national USAR teams

These responses, again work well for governmental teams but are problematic for TFPs from NGOs. Therefore, we recommend amending the wording as follows:

- governmental TFPs to be accountable to their OFF, PFP and the INSARAG Secretariat for their team's compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines. NGO TFPs to ensure their teams comply with the INSARAG Guidelines
- ensure any decisions undertaken are within the authority provided to them by their OFF / PFP (governmental teams) or supervisor / superior (NGO teams)
- liaise with the OFF at least once annually on issues pertaining to USAR response including changes to standards, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives

**Recommendation 13:** Change the gendered language within the ToR.

**Recommendation 14:** In addition, for PFP, OFF and TFP, the ToR should include mandatory attendance at an induction session for new focal points, led by OCHA ERS RFPs overseeing their respective regions.

**Recommendation 15:** At least one annual meeting to be held between PFPs, OFFs and TFPs from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR and the INSARAG network, within each member state. This could include an induction session held back-to-back with regional meetings.

At present, Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines refers to Team Leaders and Team Focal Points but it does not clarify the difference or whether one or both is needed. Discussion with the INSARAG Secretariat highlighted that Team Leaders are practitioners and Team Focal Points undertake more of a liaison role between Team Leaders and OFFs. Any network member with a team will have a team leader and they can choose to have a Team Focal Point but it is not compulsory.

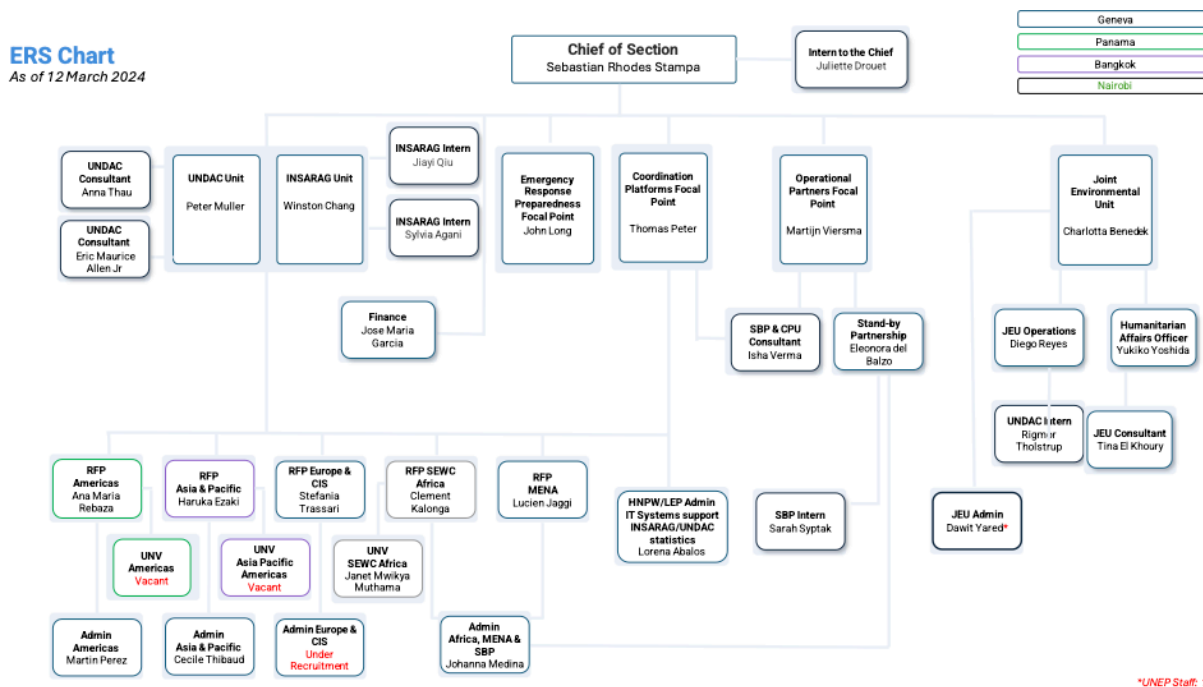
**Recommendation 16:** Draft Terms of Reference for both roles to provide clarity on what role they undertake and on whether they are compulsory or voluntary.

### Secretariat Unit Head / Regional Focal Point (RFP) / Administrative Assistant

In addition to providing further clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the PFP, OFF and TFP/TL, providing clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat including Regional Focal Points and Administrative Assistants should also be developed. In this way, the division of responsibilities will become clearer to all parties, activities can be planned more efficiently and effectively, expectations can be managed, and the system should become easier to manage and more predictable.

The Emergency Response Section (ERS) also has a number of interns and UN Volunteers (UNVs)

Currently, ERS is structured as per the organogram below.



Whilst this breaks down responsibilities according to region, it does not show who is responsible for what within the section. This organogram does not quantify exactly how much time the section has dedicated towards managing the INSARAG network, which would enable a more strategic look at what is possible within current resources or where additional resources may be required. As regional differences affect the amount of time dedicated to INSARAG, as opposed to UNDACC or Environmental Emergencies, which also form part of the roles of RFPs, the review team asked the INSARAG Secretariat to provide an overview of how much of their time they spend on INSARAG issues. The results were as follows.

	Americas	Europe / CIS	Africa	MENA	Asia Pacific	Total %
RFP	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%	300%
Admins x 4	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	200%
Head of Unit	100%					100%
Head of ERS	20%					20%
Interns x 2	These work mostly on discrete projects for ERS, not necessarily associated with INSARAG					0%
UNVs x 3	These work mostly on discrete projects for ERS, not necessarily associated with INSARAG					0%
Total Full Time Equivalent Staff						6.2

It should be noted that there is currently a vacancy for the UNV position, and an Administrator for the Europe and CIS region is being recruited. These positions are expected to be filled by the first half of this year.

As a comparison, the EMT Initiative has 40 classified teams, 5 new to be classified this year, an additional 21 under an EU project and 115 in total in the classification process. The EMT Secretariat manages 10 technical working groups as well as emergency response operations. The EMT Secretariat has eight full-time staff based in Geneva and one in each of WHO's six regional offices.

With over 90 member states and organisations participating in INSARAG, seven working groups, 57 classified teams, 27 IEC/IERs queued until 2025 and more from 2026 onwards, the numbers are comparable, yet ERS has the equivalent of approximately six full time staff only, less than half the staff the EMT Initiative has with which they manage their network.

**Recommendation 17:** Prioritise recruitment of the vacant positions. OCHA to provide permanent additional staffing to ERS to manage the INSARAG network.

## Organisational Structure and Working Processes

### Global Meeting

According to Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines, the Global Meeting was created to provide an opportunity for all INSARAG “regional groups to come together in the INSARAG Global meeting where the network convenes with the objective of strengthening the global network, thereby ensuring that it is fit for purpose in today’s rapidly changing world.” The Global Meeting is used as an opportunity to hold face-to-face regional meetings at the same time.

A review of the agendas and / or Chairman Summaries of these events shows participation as follows:

- 2010, 188 participants
- 2015, 313 participants
- 2021, over 350 (held virtually due to COVID-19)

Other than what is written above, Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines includes no information on how the Global Meeting contributes towards implementing the INSARAG strategy. The principal output of the Global Meeting, not the regional meetings that occur alongside, is a declaration endorsed by participants. In 2010, the Hyogo Declaration concerned “Recognition and strengthening of international urban search and rescue operational standards”. In 2015, the Abu Dhabi declaration concerned “Strengthening Preparedness and Response Standards of National and International Urban Search and Rescue Operations” and in 2021, the Warsaw Declaration called on INSARAG members to “Strengthen Quality, Predictability, Speed, and Flexibility in Support of National and Local Urban Search and Rescue Capacities.”

Whilst laudable, each of these declarations should form part of the INSARAG strategy already, which is approved at the ISG by Policy Focal Points. Declarations and endorsements, whilst nice to have, do not contribute towards INSARAG’s strategic objectives, which are accomplished through discussions, activities and decisions taken in Team Leaders, working group, regional meetings, as well as the ISG. The meeting therefore appears to serve primarily as a networking and information sharing

event, organised at great cost to hosts and participated in by those members who can afford to travel to the event. Discussion on issues that progress INSARAG are absent.

Apart from the Warsaw Global Meeting, which was held entirely online due to COVID-19, participation in the event will be restricted to those participants who can afford to travel to the meeting's location. Critical feedback from KILs point to INSARAG members at times utilising face-to-face INSARAG meetings at all levels as an opportunity less to contribute to the development of INSARAG but more of an opportunity to travel. This is harsh criticism from INSARAG members, raised on more than one occasion, so worth mentioning here. Review of Global Meeting agendas identifies that the Global Meeting is primarily concerned with sharing information on operational issues.

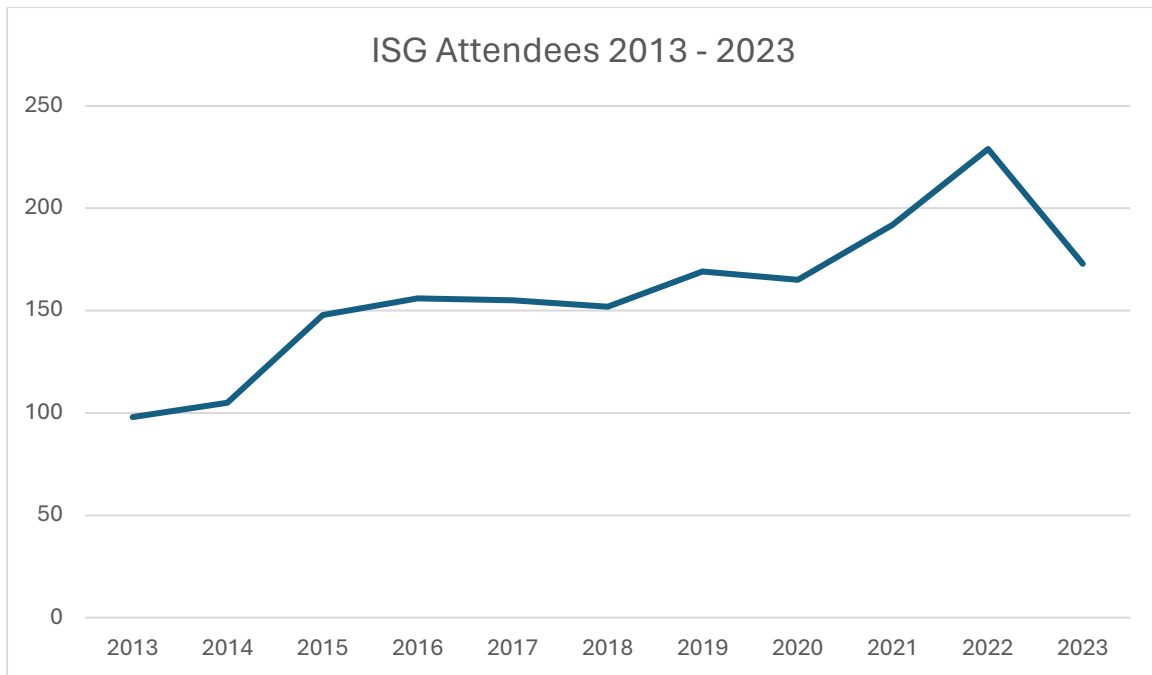
**Recommendation 18:** In light of the repeated concern from INSARAG stakeholders that resources are scarce, the network should consider discontinuing the Global Meeting and reassigning resources to activities identified within the INSARAG strategy of vital importance. Share information by email and undertake presentations as required in a virtual environment to facilitate inclusivity and reduce resource implications. Hold discussions on operational issues at the Team Leaders' Meeting, within working groups and within the newly created Regional Operational Meetings. See the Network Structure Section also.

### The INSARAG Steering Group (ISG)

According to Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines 2020, the "INSARAG Steering Group is an open meeting, presided by the Global Chair, in which policy topics are being discussed amongst the PFPs of all Member States. Members of the ISG include the following:

- INSARAG Global Chair
- Chair and Vice-Chairs of each Regional Group
- INSARAG Secretariat
- working group Chairs
- INSARAG Member States' Policy Focal Point (or delegate)
- INSARAG Classified NGO team representative (or delegate)
- representative from the INSARAG Team Leaders group
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

However, the meeting is attended by vast range of attendees, not only those as prescribed within Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines, for example, OFPs and TFPs from many teams, not just those who officially represent the Team Leaders Group. The meeting also includes classified NGO team representatives as they are not represented by their member state representative. Attendance at the ISG has grown significantly, from 98 in 2013 to a high of 229 in 2022, falling down slightly to 173.



Composition of the ISG was discussed during the 2013 governance review and a proposal put forward to reduce the size of the ISG as follows:

- Global Chair
- Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs *potentially accompanied by two more countries per region*
- two representatives from the Team Leaders
- working group Chairs
- IFRC
- OCHA
- INSARAG Secretariat

According to the decision matrix produced after the 2013 meeting, this was accepted but with the addition of Focal Points from IEC Member countries including NGOs and relevant agencies. It was agreed the changes would be included within a revised set of INSARAG Guidelines in 2015. In 2015, Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines included the following as members of the ISG.

“The Steering Group is composed of the Global Chair, the three Regional Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs, the working groups (usually the Chairperson), the Secretariat, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Policy Focal Points of member countries with IEC classified teams, including representatives from classified NGO teams, and the USAR Team Leaders participate.”

It appears that between the 2013 governance review and the 2015 INSARAG Guidelines, slight changes were made, with the potential attendance by two other countries from the regions, in italics above being removed. It is unclear from both the decision matrix of 2013 and 2015 whether the wording from stating focal points from IEC member countries meant PFPs or OFPs, or both. Readers may have assumed both, contributing to the growth in size of the ISG.

It is assumed that the change in wording in 2020 to include all Member States’ PFPs was to promote inclusivity and to keep the meeting at policy level. However, as the network has grown, the number of participants has grown also. There are 66

INSARAG member states and so if both a PFP and OFP for all member states attend the ISG, which is what has been happening and what many key informants advocate is required, then this would mean 132 people attend the ISG.

At present it is difficult to understand who is in the room, who represents which member state / organisation and who is eligible to contribute and make decisions. Respondents to the survey indicated that their biggest issues with the ISG were a) decision making is challenging due to the number of participants and b) that the mix of policy and operational makes it challenging to send the right representative. It is unclear whether the mix of attendees at policy level and operational level has driven the change of agenda to a mix of policy and operational level or vice versa.

In addition, the distribution of teams across INSARAG regions is uneven. There are currently 42 classified teams in AEME, 11 in Asia Pacific and 4 in the Americas. Key informants identify that it is always the same people / organisations contributing to the discussion, predominantly from the 'sending' member states such as those within the EU, UK, United States of America (US), New Zealand and Australia. In general comments pointed to there being very little space for discussion or that there needs to be time before the ISG for consideration of issues. Participants feel that often the information needed to inform decisions is received too late and that the opening statements and presentations eat into valuable discussion time. Furthermore, the mix of operational and policy discussion results in disengaged participants. In addition, having the ISG in Geneva without the potential for online participation does not work and many PFPs cannot attend due to availability and / or cost reasons. For others, notably those in Oceania, an entirely online ISG would mean attending through the night, which is not workable. Others point to decisions having already been made beforehand, so this is a tick box exercise and / or that INSARAG donors have more influence. The survey and comments therefore point to issues of inclusivity, transparency, and practicality. See [Network Structure Section](#) for recommendations on how to improve the ISG.

## Regional Ownership Model and its linkages with OCHA

The INSARAG Network is divided into three regions: Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Africa (AEME), Asia Pacific and the Americas. For each region, there is a corresponding RFP from the INSARAG Secretariat based within OCHA Regional Offices in Panama (Americas), Bangkok (Asia Pacific) and Nairobi (Africa), with the AEME region having three RFPs (Africa, Middle East, and North Africa (MENA) and Europe and the CIS) due to the number of network members within that regional grouping, all based in Geneva.

Each region has a Troika<sup>14</sup> system, where there is an (Incoming) Regional Vice Chair, Regional Chair and (Outgoing) Regional Vice Chair, each of whom undertake the role for one year, implying a three-year overall commitment to the position. There has only been one occasion since the post of Regional Chair was created where there has been more than one candidate for the position on any given year and often there are no candidates and the INSARAG Secretariat and Regional Chairs have bilateral discussions with member states to persuade them to take up the role. The absence of an advance planning schedule is hampering the ability of member states to nominate themselves to undertake the role of Regional Chair. Survey respondents highlighted

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<sup>14</sup> Known as the Board in the Americas region.

that the Troika system works well in terms of building the capacity of incoming Regional Vice Chairs to undertake the Regional Chair role, that it provides diversity of leadership and fosters good institutional memory.

When asked about their satisfaction with the Troika system, 35 (out of 55) respondents (64%) indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Troika system.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Very satisfied	7	13%
Satisfied	28	51%
Neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied	13	24%
Dissatisfied	3	5%
Not familiar with the Troika System	4	7%

When this was explored further, the following was identified:

- resource constraints (people/financial) restrict ability to undertake the role of Regional Chair
- one year in post is not enough time to make a difference, but there is limited scope to increase the duration of holding the post
- it is difficult to plan to undertake the Regional Chair role as this is not done far enough in advance
- only a few member states have the capacity to undertake the role of Regional Chair
- that the selection of candidate is perceived to be a political decision and there is no selection methodology
- that the Regional Chair role is not embedded within a five-year cycle
- that the Regional Chair often lacks in-depth knowledge of USAR and the INSARAG network
- that a few member states dominate the Troika
- that the Regional Chair's contribution to the role can be variable

By far the greatest impediment identified by the study was that member states lack either the financial or human resources to undertake the role, which results in a domination by a few member states, notably from those with bigger economies and more developed USAR capacity for both domestic and international response. The INSARAG network takes pride in its inclusivity, however inclusivity only goes so far as member states have the resources to fully commit to the network as well as the available support from the INSARAG Secretariat. Even those who would generally be perceived as having the resources to assign dedicated staff time and funds to their participation in the INSARAG network find it challenging to do so. The INSARAG Secretariat RFPs provide a significant amount of support to the Troikas, but there is a limit to what they can achieve when both parties have multiple-competing workstreams and their time to dedicate to the network is limited.

Comments also pointed to the need to ensure roles and responsibilities are divided equally amongst the (Incoming) Regional Vice Chair, Regional Chair and (Outgoing) Regional Vice Chair, in a process that would build capacity, facilitate development, implementation and monitoring of the regional plan against the INSARAG strategy as well as build institutional memory. The current ToRs within Volume 1 of the INSARAG

Guidelines are high-level and do not capture the full range of tasks that are required. Having improved ToRs for each position would provide transparency as to the requirements of the role, as well as the time involved, and therefore enable member states to decide on whether to nominate themselves for the position. At the same time, it would be useful to clarify what support would be offered by the RFPs; Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines does not currently include any job description for RFPs and what activities they can or can't do in support of regional networks. Clarification in both these areas would facilitate the network working more efficiently and effectively, including on monitoring progress of regional activities against the strategy.

**Recommendation 19:** ToRs developed for the (Incoming) Regional Vice Chair, (Outgoing) Regional Vice Chair and Chair that clearly define and assign roles and responsibilities to underpin their work during their tenure.

**Recommendation 20:** The Secretariat to plan the Troika five years in advance and maintain this on a rolling basis.

**Recommendation 21:** Develop a ToR for the role of RFP, clearly detailing the activities that they are able to undertake in support of the Troika.

## Regional Meetings

In addition to challenges with the role of Regional Chair, survey respondents also identified challenges with regional meetings, where only 47% indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied, 21% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and six people (9%) indicated they were dissatisfied with the regional meetings. Of these, again respondents identified that too many people attending makes decision making difficult (27, 14%) and that the mix of policy / operational makes it hard to send the right person (24, 13%).

**Recommendation 22:** Separate policy and operational through the creation of Regional Committees to discuss policy issues. Regional Committee meetings should be hybrid to facilitate inclusivity and real-time translation provided where required. Decisions from the Regional Committees to be submitted to the Regional Steering Group for discussion and decision. See [Network Structure Section](#) for more details.

**Recommendation 23:** Separate policy from operational through the creation of Regional Operational Meetings. Regional Operational meetings to be hybrid to facilitate inclusivity and real-time translation provided where required. Decisions from the Regional Operational Meetings to be submitted to the Regional Committee for discussion and decision. See [Network Structure Section](#) for more details.

**Recommendation 24:** Create a Regional Steering Group comprising the Regional Vice Chairs and Chairs from each region. The Regional Steering Group to hold at least four meetings per year, three of which are online, to discuss policy issues. from the Regional Steering Group are discussed at a newly created Global Steering Group. See [Network Structure Section](#) for more details.

## Relationship with OCHA HQ and Regional Offices

As mentioned above, the INSARAG Secretariat now has RFPs located in Nairobi, Bangkok and Panama, with the RFPs for Europe and the CIS and MENA located in Geneva. The placement of RFPs in the regions, as opposed to Geneva is seen as a positive step, however, again, this is not without its challenges. For example, discussion with Africa OCHA Regional Offices and the Africa RFP, as well as survey



results from African Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Focal Points point to USAR activities not being of most importance for Sub Saharan African countries, with the risk from hydrometeorological hazards being most prevalent and therefore of most importance within the region. Discussion with OCHA representatives in the region pointed to a clear separation between disaster management and humanitarian despite all working under the same emergency coordination umbrella. Furthermore, respondents to the survey drafted specifically for DRR focal points in the Africa region identified that the lack of both financial and human resources was preventing them from being part of the INSARAG network. However, the sample size of 14 out of the 105 to whom we sent the survey is low.

In the Asia Pacific region, there is good communication and interaction between the INSARAG RFP and the rest of OCHA Regional Office Asia Pacific (ROAP), in Bangkok. However, Australian respondents identified there have been challenges with broader communications from the INSARAG Secretariat and OCHA to member states within the Pacific region, for example around training opportunities which is impeding their ability to undertake capacity building initiatives in the Pacific region.

There is a partnership between France, New Zealand and Australia to facilitate emergency response coordination. Patchy coordination by OCHA in the Pacific region has led, in part, to the creation of regional mechanism for the Pacific region including building its own deployment mechanism. Australia and New Zealand have both stopped supporting the UNDAC mechanism as they believed that UNDAC members sent to respond to emergencies in the region were not drawn from within the region, lacked the knowledge and cultural appropriateness for the region. Regions are now more often taking ownership of disaster management that meets their needs and is coordinated at a regional level, evidenced through the roles played by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres en América Central (CEPRENAC) and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management etc.

Intra-regional differences are notable, and each region covers vast areas with profound differences. This is extremely notable in the AEME region, notably with Europe and the CIS, which could be generalised as 'sending' countries, with Africa and MENA in general being more vulnerable to seismic risk. There are also regional differences around capacity. For example, in the Asia Pacific region, there are notable differences between Asia and seismic risk and capacity versus the small island developing states of the Pacific region, which are predominantly affected by climate change and hydrometeorological events. These changes have already resulted in the creation of an Arabic language INSARAG group in the MENA region and discussion on the need for a grouping for the Pacific with a concept note on the creation of an INSARAG Pacific Sub-Regional Group to be shared shortly.

When asked the question on the survey as to whether the AEME region should be formally split, total respondents saying yes was 22 (27%) with 23 saying no (28%). When these were disaggregated to AEME respondents alone, 12 said, yes the region should be split and 16 said no. When selecting the responses only from PFPs and from those within the AEME region, five said no, they should not be split and one said yes. Two respondents said they were unsure and five provide comments. Comments suggested a split may be useful, others that the region is not coherent. Others said that further discussion by the Secretariat with countries would be warranted due to the

specific development needs and finances within the region. Discussion with key informant interviews indicated that it is important to keep 'senders' and 'receivers' within one region to foster intra-regional cooperation and solidarity. Some viewed disaggregating regions as OCHA bureaucracy or an OCHA construct within the current regions.

In Asia Pacific, there were 16 responses to the question as to whether the Asia Pacific region should be split, 13 of whom were from the Asia region and only three from the Pacific region. Of those, 12 said this should not take place and four said they should be split geographically. When this question was disaggregated to PFPs, there were only four, three from the Asia region and one from the Pacific and two said it should not be split and two others said that it should be split geographically. From the survey data for the Asia Pacific region, there is no clear answer.

There were 14 responses in the Americas region, of whom four were from North America (excluding Mexico) and 10 from Latin America. Eight said the region should not be split and four said they cannot comment for the region, even whilst coming from the region. One suggested it should be split geographically to North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean as three distinct regions. When the data was disaggregated to the responses from PFPs only, there were only four respondents, all of whom said the region should not be split.

**Recommendation 25:** No formal split of the regions to take place in order to foster information sharing, regional cooperation and solidarity.

However, as noted previously, when compared to the size of the EMT Initiative in terms of number of teams and countries involved, staffing within the Secretariat and regions is low.

**Recommendation 26:** Add an additional RFP to the Secretariat. Take into consideration broader ERS staffing needs vis-à-vis the scope of managing the INSARAG network compared to the EMT Initiative as recommended previously. There should be consideration of additional extra staffing should there be a substantial shift towards response to hydrometeorological events as recommended in this study.

**Recommendation 27:** If OCHA is unable to increase staffing within the Secretariat, then regions to consider staffing this role themselves. Whilst they would operate outside of the UN system, they could undertake the same activities as OCHA RFPs in support of their region. See [Network Structure Section](#) for more details.

## Team Leaders' Meeting

When asked about satisfaction with the Team Leaders' meeting, 44 (66%) of survey respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Team Leaders meeting, 12 (18%) were neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied and only one person (1%) identified that they were dissatisfied with this meeting. When asked to elaborate on whether anything needs changing, 30 (31%) responded that there needs to be a greater understanding of member states' political / financial strategy to inform decision making. This points to a disconnect between the operational and policy which needs to be addressed.

**Recommendation 28:** Amend the ToRs for PFPs and OFPs to include the need for improved communications around strategy / policy objectives and financial commitment to USAR. Ensure inclusion of this responsibility within the Focal Point inductions recommended elsewhere in this review.

**Recommendation 29:** Amend the ToRs for OFPs and TFPs to include the need to inform TFPs on member states' policy / strategic objectives and financial commitment to USAR. Ensure inclusion of this responsibility within the Focal Point inductions recommended elsewhere in this review.

Respondents also identified cost implications of travelling to Team Leaders meetings as an issue and that they should be longer than two days to be worth the effort. Others identified that one meeting per year is not sufficient.

**Recommendation 30:** All Team Leaders meetings to be held in a hybrid environment and investment made in good online meeting facilitation. This could include real-time translation and transcription software. The Secretariat to ensure in advance of any events whether the proposed tools work in every country. Consider four meetings per year, with three online and one face-to-face.

Respondents also identified that the Team Leaders meeting needs to truly focus on operational issues and that meetings could potentially include Team Leader training before or after the meeting.

**Recommendation 31:** The topics that would normally be presented in the Global Meeting are addressed at the Team Leaders meeting and the Global Meeting discontinued.

**Recommendation 32:** Consider holding face to face training for TFPs, Classifiers and Mentors back-to-back with Team Leader meetings.

**Recommendation 33:** Multi-language, online training for Team Leaders, Classifiers and Mentors to be developed to increase inclusivity and efficiency. This should be downloadable so as to operate in low-bandwidth contexts.

**Recommendation 34:** The network to consider which training in general could be converted into online training to increase accessibility and to reduce travel.

## Working Groups

The working groups are seen as an integral part of the INSARAG network and most developments to the INSARAG Guidelines have been made through the work of these groups and survey respondents indicated that 82% were either satisfied or very satisfied with how they are working. However, key informant interviews with members of the working groups themselves identified a range of challenges:

- some people attend but do not participate (speak) and / or contribute (undertake work). They attend meetings and at times speak at meetings but do not actively produce work that contributes to the working groups' objectives. Attendance at meetings can be sporadic
- it is the same people / member states doing all the work to move these forward
- some people stay too long within a working group and fresh ideas are needed
- choosing participants by region is problematic as it often does not result in the working group having the skillsets it needs to make progress
- sometimes the skillset does not exist within the INSARAG network, and the working group is reliant on volunteer support from outside the network making it even more difficult to progress quickly
- they pop up without a clear rationale on how they contribute towards INSARAG's strategy and / or exist for too long

- they operate in silos unless strong working group chairs drive inter-WG collaboration. There is no coordination of working groups
- rejecting proposed working group participants when they don't have the right skillset or are not contributing is challenging for both the Secretariat and working group Chairs
- the voluntary nature of participation in working groups impedes quicker progress
- that working group Chairs identify the need for face-to-face engagement but that costs to attend meetings can prohibit attendance by some
- that even at face-to-face meetings, engagement can be low with members, at times leaving the meetings halfway through for non-work reasons
- that there is value in having people in working group meetings as a learning opportunity but there should be clarity over attendance versus contribution

The area that came up repeatedly was the issue of attendance versus participation versus contribution. Respondents felt that for a peer-to-peer network, the network's ability to provide qualified and engaged working group participants who actively contribute to working group objectives was extremely low, resulting in a disproportionate amount of work for other working group members. There is an understanding that everybody has to juggle work commitments and that this can lead, at times to sporadic attendance, participation or contribution but the general feeling was that at times the absence of attendance / participation / contribution was the norm, rather than the exception. It is therefore important for those proposing members in working groups to ensure that time is made within working group members' day-to-day roles and for working group members themselves to be transparent about the time they can commit. Working group members have to be prepared to have work delegated to them by the working group Chair and for that work to be undertaken to a satisfactory level within the timeframe set by the working group Chair. In addition, it should be clear that no INSARAG member state or organisation has the role of Chair of any working group on a permanent basis.

**Recommendation 35:** Organisations proposing working group members to ensure that the candidate they propose has the skillsets identified by the working group Chair.

**Recommendation 36:** Organisations proposing candidates to be part of a working group need to ensure that the role is enshrined in their job description as an appropriate percentage of their day-to-day activities e.g. 5%, 10% etc.

**Recommendation 37:** Creation of an observer status within working groups. This would facilitate learning and understanding across regions.

**Recommendation 38:** the Secretariat should enforce the INSARAG Guidelines on tenure of working group Co-Chairs, ensuring balanced representation.

**Recommendation 39:** The number of working groups should be reduced to the same amount or fewer than the amount of RFPs within the Secretariat so that RFPs can support each working group effectively. Topics should be amalgamated as appropriate, for example through the reinstatement of the Operations Working Group which would be a catch all on technical issues. The Secretariat should ensure that new working groups contribute to the medium and long-term outcomes identified within the strategy. See [Global Strategy Section](#) below for further details.

## NGOs and Partners

Discussions with NGOs point to an absence of power within the network. Whilst they meet the same standards as for governmental teams, they have limited voice within network decisions. As an NGO, they do not have a focal point within the system, aside from direct representation by them within meetings such as the Team Leaders or Regional Meetings or through participation in working groups. When spaces on INSARAG courses are available, these are distributed to national focal points and there is a perception that they prioritise participation of members from their own governmental teams and that NGO team members are overlooked.

**Recommendation 40:** The letter of endorsement by PFPs to an NGO's participation in the INSARAG network to be reframed as a letter of acknowledgement of their involvement within the network. The separation of governmental and non-governmental is key. Governmental entities do not have authority over NGO teams and should not endorse whether NGO teams have the skills to participate in the INSARAG network.

**Recommendation 41:** All further correspondence to be direct with NGO Teams and not go through national focal points to ensure equal opportunities to attend meetings and courses.

**Recommendation 42:** NGO Team Leaders / Focal Points are eligible to represent their region within the newly created Regional Operational Meetings. See [Network Structure Section](#) for further details.

## Accountability and Compliance

The review team also looked at the issue of accountability and compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines, due primarily to several issues arising both during response and during day-to-day operations. These are:

- Not providing personnel to staff the USAR Coordination Cell (UCC) during a response. This was identified both during the Nepal response in 2015 and the Türkiye / Syria earthquake in 2023
- Teams not providing classifiers equal to the minimum number of classifiers that undertook their own classification. i.e. 4 (light teams), 7 (medium teams) or 8 (heavy teams) within the five-year period from their last IEC/IER
- That teams from member states who are part of the INSARAG network and who deployed to the Türkiye/Syria earthquake were not compliant with the INSARAG Guidelines.

Whilst these are all perceived as breaches of the INSARAG Guidelines, the INSARAG Guidelines are silent on ramifications for non-compliance including who or which organisation within the network is empowered to ensure compliance. One key reason could be that the INSARAG Guidelines are called guidelines and not standards, and in English, it is permissible to deviate from guidelines where you feel appropriate, but standards are something that need to be met. This causes friction in the system. In addition, the reasons behind these issues are never black or white but fall somewhere in between. For example, classifiers need to have a good level of English but if that does not exist within teams, then meeting the requirement of providing classifiers to other teams will be impossible. Achieving classification is done in slow time with much preparation but rapid-onset emergencies don't generally give notice of when they are going to happen and so there will always be instances when teams will fall short of

INSARAG standards whilst on deployment. Trying to police this gets difficult as you need to look at intent. Do teams intend to not comply with the INSARAG Guidelines or are there other factors at play? Did this happen once or on multiple occasions? There needs to be a level of tolerance within the system.

The idea of penalties raises the issue of who is adjudicating and what authority do they have over others within the network. It also raises many political challenges. Many feel that it is the INSARAG Secretariat's responsibility to enforce compliance, but there is nothing within the INSARAG Guidelines of this nature. It is the network that empowers the INSARAG Secretariat, so what role do network members themselves have to play? You could set up a panel of network members to undertake an investigation of alleged breaches of another member, which may work well for NGO teams, but this is a member state organisation and the concept of one member state imposing a penalty on another is problematic.

Even the case of not providing classifiers to others is problematic. It might be easy to say that if a team has not provided qualifiers, they will be excluded from the IER system until they do so. However, a team may say that it does not have enough English speakers to meet this requirement, but who judges whether that is the case? If the INSARAG Secretariat is asked to judge, how does it do so? In the absence of English speakers, are there other ways the team could support the network? For example, a team could offer to organise and finance meetings, trainings, document translations, etc., instead of providing classifiers.

Matters of perceived non-compliance are more easily managed within a country. The review teams feels that the INSARAG Secretariat should be able to raise the issue with the relevant PFP and OFP in the case of Member States or TFP in the case of NGOs, but not for them to be judge and jury on the issue. Perceived non-compliance should be reviewed internally. The requirements section of the INSARAG Guidelines (section 2.6.1) states that TFPs need to "guarantee the USAR Team's adherence to the INSARAG Guidelines and the minimal standards in preparedness and response. TFP TORs within Annex A of the INSARAG Guidelines include that they are "responsible to promote and ensure the INSARAG methodology and minimal standards in preparedness and response within his team." The INSARAG Policy Focal Point ToRs within Annex A state that PFPs should ensure the "implementation of INSARAG Guidelines and methodology as part of the national and international response of the Member State's USAR Teams," however there is nothing within the description of the OFP within 2.6.1, nor in the ToRs in Annex A which imply a responsibility to ensure implementation of the INSARAG Guidelines. There is a disconnect therefore between PFPs and TFPs. This has been noted elsewhere in the report and a recommendation already made to include this within the OFP's ToRs. See Operational Focal Point ToRs for further information.

**Recommendation 43:** The INSARAG network to discuss whether they are INSARAG Standards or INSARAG Guidelines. This could include discussion around whether there are non-negotiables within the INSARAG Guidelines that all teams need to meet whilst deployed or during preparedness initiatives, should the decision be to keep them as guidelines, not standards.

**Recommendation 44:** Include an internal investigations framework within the INSARAG Guidelines. The Secretariat could raise the issue with PFPs from member states and TFPs from NGOs, but any investigation process would be undertaken internally. Following internal investigations, PFPs and TFPs to provide assurances to

the INSARAG Secretariat that the issue has been investigated in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines.

**Recommendation 45:** Discuss whether the network wants to apply ‘soft’ or ‘hard’ penalties within the system. Hard penalties could include being stripped of IEC/IER status; soft compliance would be continual reinforcement of the need to comply with INSARAG Guidelines.

## Decision-Making Mandate and Responsibilities

According to the INSARAG Guidelines Volume 1, all decisions within INSARAG fora should be taken by consensus. The UN definition of consensus is.

“Member States consider it very important to adopt a resolution that has the widest possible agreement among Member States. Before taking action on a draft resolution, Member States spend hours discussing every word in the resolution to reach agreement on the text. When consensus on the text is reached, in the General Assembly all Member States agree to adopt the draft resolution without taking a vote. Adopting a draft without a vote is the most basic definition of what consensus means.”<sup>15</sup>

In 2023, this was challenged during the selection of the Regional Chair for the AEME region where two countries wanted to undertake the role in 2025. As there was more than one candidate, the decision was passed back to the Global Chair for review and the decision was made for one of them to undertake the role in 2025. The importance of the Global Chair as a neutral, independent arbiter was required.

INSARAG meetings are often time-bound and achieving consensus can be time-consuming and protracted. The ISG, which is an annual event at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships (HNPW) meeting in Geneva is limited to one day. Being unable to reach consensus within that timeframe would be problematic unless the issue had been discussed at length, by all relevant stakeholders in advance of the event, but this does not take place. In meetings where survey respondents indicate there is very little time for discussion, having the right amount of discussion to achieve consensus is limited. In addition, not all PFPs are able to attend the ISG and so their voice goes unheard. When asked if they were content with decision-making by consensus, responses from 75 people were as follows.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Yes	49	65%
No	21	28%
Other	5	7%

When this was disaggregated to the responses of PFPs only, the findings were similar.

Option	Answer	Percentage
Yes	13	54%
No	6	25%
Other	5	21%

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/how-decisions-are-made-un>

Of the five comments, one comment did not make sense to the review team, and we were unable to investigate further as they did not leave their name and one comment highlighted that there are different definitions of consensus within the UN. One was supportive of consensus with the caveat that decisions had to be in line with basic principles of protection and another identified that were content with consensus but asked what happens if consensus not reached. One comment identified that they were in support of consensus if the understanding of what consensus means is agreed by all.

If you take the comments with caveats as supportive of consensus, assuming those conditions met, those PFPs in agreement by consensus are as follows.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	16	67%
No	6	25%
Other	2	8%

For those who said they were not content with decisions by consensus, the review team disaggregated the information supplied by PFPs by region to help understand if there were regional differences to what consensus meant and of the six PFPs, five came from the AEME region and one from the Americas. Of the 13 PFPs who voted yes to consensus, six of those were from the AEME region and so the answers were clearly not regionally driven.

When asked how consensus should be determined, the results were as follows.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No Policy Focal Point objects	28	58%
Anonymous online tool and results shared on screen with the ISG	18	38%
Other	2	4%

When this was disaggregated to PFPs only the results were less clear. Where the PFP chose not to respond, these have been removed from the percentage calculation.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No Policy Focal Point objects	8	57%
Anonymous online tool and results shared on screen with the ISG	5	36%
Other	1	7%

Out of 21 PFPs, seven chose not to answer this question. Other comments said that both are acceptable, and that for reaching consensus, it is necessary to know which organisation is objecting to undertake further discussion and negotiation with the hope of reaching consensus. It is important to understand who objects to work with them towards resolution.



In its 30-year history, there has only been one instance of consensus not being reached. The survey did not ask those who responded no to the question why they objected to consensus but did provide alternative methods to consensus. Answers were as follows:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
By show of hands in the room (half plus one - simple majority)	17	24%
By show of hands in the room (100% in agreement)	4	6%
Anonymous online voting (half plus one, simple majority), results shared on screen with the ISG	23	33%
Anonymous online voting (100% in agreement), results shared on screen with the ISG	14	20%
Other	12	17%

Three respondents supported anonymous online voting with a two-thirds majority to pass and another suggested a limit of 85% to pass. Comments also included the need for 100% agreement for certain types of decisions and a simple majority for others. Others suggested voting should only take place if consensus not reached, that decisions should not be made at the ISG because it does not guarantee representation by all or that consensus does not mean unanimous and so a simple majority would suffice. One suggested limits are placed on countries representing regional organisations to vote and another rejected the idea of any alternative to consensus as the INSARAG network operates under the humanitarian umbrella.

Of the three PFPs who responded, one suggested a 100% needed to pass and only for certain decisions of global concern. Another pointed to the need to set a threshold for consensus and another that any decision process had to be transparent. Having a threshold for consensus implies a vote, not general agreement, however it is clear that there needs to be transparency. These answers again point to different understanding of consensus and many differing views of how best to make decisions within INSARAG fora. INSARAG is a large, global network with vastly differing views and so it will be impossible to please everybody all the time. The principle should be that any decisions made are for the benefit of the network and that at times this means compromise on an individual level to accept the majority view.

INSARAG is not a UN mechanism, but a mechanism formed by member states operating under a UN umbrella which affords the network credibility and status and a platform from which to develop. As it is not a UN mechanism, it is, however, free to choose how it operates. A simplistic view could be that the UN umbrella and a Secretariat managed by OCHA has benefited the network greatly and so deviating from UN rules would be an affront to the system and that you can't have it one way and not the other. A pragmatic view may say that with limited time to make decisions, consensus should be the objective, but allowances made for when consensus cannot be reached. However, voting can be divisive and disenfranchising and under UN rules, not secret unless for elections. If rules allow voting, a network member that objects to a proposal runs the risk that others will insist on a vote, which it will lose. It is the obligation of the objector to provide a compromise position. In its over 30-year history, hundreds of decisions have been made by consensus despite different

understandings of what consensus means and there has been only one instance to challenge the status quo.<sup>16</sup> On that occasion, the only compromise that could be made was a change of years in which to undertake the role, as the INSARAG Guidelines permits any Member State to nominate themselves for that position. In that instance, both network members were eligible according to INSARAG Guidelines and a schedule of years to undertake the role agreed.

**Recommendation 46:** Agree the definition of consensus given within this report. Consensus is endorsed when nobody eligible to vote objects. No threshold should be set, and consensus does not mean 100%. Continue with consensus as the way to make decisions. Ensure that all meetings where decisions of a policy nature are undertaken are hybrid to ensure full participation of those who are permitted to make decisions or accept proxy votes in advance. On the rare occasion that consensus cannot be reached, the Global Chair to make the decision, in consultation with the three regional chairs and INSARAG Secretary, on behalf of the INSARAG network following the principles outlined within the INSARAG Guidelines.

## Membership

### Application Process and Qualification Requirements

Of those surveyed, 56 (69%) said the application process, qualification conditions and criteria for INSARAG membership were clear with 12 (15%) saying they weren't clear and 12 (15%) indicating they did not know. When asked what could be clarified, they said the following.

Option	Answer	%
That you don't have to be classified team to be a member	20	27%
That you don't need to be a member state to be an INSARAG member	10	14%
That NGO teams must be approved by the PFP	20	27%
Whether non-member states can use the Virtual OSOCC (VOSOCC)	13	17%
Other	11	15%

Comments included the need to state that membership means compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines, that the authority of the PFP needs to be clarified. Also, that the network is peer-to-peer, meaning that it is expected that members support other members and the network as a whole and that as a new member, it is expected that you participate in meetings and trainings to guide your USAR capacity building process.

In response to the comments, the review team agree that to be an INSARAG member, you do not need to comply with the INSARAG Guidelines until such point as you obtain IRNAP or IEC/IER classification and that amending the Guidelines to say that compliance is compulsory would restrict membership.

When considering the membership wording in section 2.6 where it relates to obtaining classification, it is the opinion of the review team that to carry out IEC/IER there needs

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/model-united-nations/action-phase-making-decisions>

to be clear evidence that a team has the intent and capabilities to be deployed outside of its own country, and potentially its region, to be considered for IEC classification. There is a misconception that IRNAP certification is of a lower level than an IEC/IER, which is leading to a greater demand for IEC. The rescue standards in a NAP, IRNAP and IEC/IER are the same and this should be the driving factor for any country wishing to build their own capacity. A NAP is perfectly acceptable for most member states aiming to respond domestically and an IRNAP accredits against INSARAG guidelines should they wish to be awarded this certification. Achieving IEC is not a status symbol when a NAP or IRNAP would suffice. It is a member state's obligation to protect its own people first and foremost.

**Recommendation 47:** Amend the wording within section 2.6 to place the focus on building domestic/national capacity first, then the potential for having a NAP, then an IRNAP. Clarify whether intraregional agreements where a NAP or IRNAP is sufficient could be established. This may alleviate some of the pressure on the IEC system where teams only intend to deploy within their region.

The same theory applies to countries in active conflict. International teams may not wish to deploy or be accepted for deployment to a country in conflict, but regional teams may be able to do so. An example of this is that Lebanon sent a team to Syria in response to the Türkiye/Syria earthquake, one of the few teams to do so. It may be that member states / organisations are aiming for IEC instead of IRNAP because they intend to deploy outside of their region but that achieving IRNAP standards would be acceptable.

The classification process is not included within the terms of reference for this review which is primarily focused on network governance. However, the review team could not fail to see the challenges around the IEC/IER process through the literature review, survey and discussions with key informants. When taking that into account, together with the language included within section 2.6, the review team concluded that if not already included within other volumes of the INSARAG Guidelines, they should consider legislating that all INSARAG members should have a documented NAP and IRNAP in place before they are eligible to enter the IEC/IER system. In addition, the Troika in each region should socialise the concept of IRNAP for intraregional deployment instead of IEC/IER. This already exists in Central America where arrangements are in place which allow for intraregional deployments. These are not formal recommendations as classification is outside of the scope of the review, rather something for the network to consider.

Anonymised information gathered via the survey will be provided to the Secretariat to facilitate discussions on reducing the pressure on the IEC/IER classification system following on from the INSARAG External Classification and Reclassification (IEC/IER) Review of July 2020.

## Geographic Diversity and Representation

When asked about the challenges of being a member of the INSARAG network, 37 respondents (22%) indicated that there was a lack of diversity, 44 (27%) respondents identified a lack of financial resources, and 21 (13%) identified a lack of human resources. Only 14 (8%) said that non USAR emergencies more prevalent in their country, however this figure excludes responses from the Africa region where a separate survey was undertaken. In that survey, only three out of 14 respondents felt that to be the main reason. Of the 14 survey respondents in Africa, where multiple

reasons were provided, 10 said lack of financial resources, eight said lack of human resources and four said lack of political will. Other comments pointed to never having been invited to participate or lack of awareness in the system. Discussions with the Africa RFP point to a high turnover of DRR focal points in Africa which could account for these responses. The results suggest that the Africa region does feel there is value in joining INSARAG and not joining is not because USAR capacities are not the most prevalent in their member state, but that it is the lack of financial and human resources which is preventing them from doing so, echoing that of other regions.

We already know that resources, both financial and human are at a premium within the network, but asked PFPs and OFPs the question whether they can provide financial support to other countries to participate more actively in INSARAG. Of the 55 who responded, nobody said yes, they could provide financial support, 11 (20%) said maybe and 12 (22%) said no. Of those who selected 'Other' and responded with comments, one identified that there could be the potential of supporting countries in the Pacific to participate in INSARAG but that it would need to be framed within a broader emergency context. Another identified that it would depend on the country and the cost, another that they could only support through the UNDAC mission account and another that it is a political decision. Member states and organisations are already providing support to other member states to build their capacity, just not through direct financial transfers, but through in-kind support and not to enable participation on its own. If member states needed financial support to participate in INSARAG, it is unlikely that it would be possible to provide enough financial support to enough countries to enable them to participate. Zero cost mechanisms would need to be in place, such as having all meetings as hybrid, to ensure that all those who could not travel to a meeting are included. That assumes that potential members have the time within their daily schedule to commit amongst competing priorities and we have seen that human resource time is stretched across the entire network, this is not solely a prospective new member issue.

However, when asked what should be done to increase diversity of INSARAG member states, of 55 respondents, 23 (42%) identified that financial support to under-represented countries would increase diversity. Of these, the greatest proportion in support of financial input to member states to participate, came from AEME, Europe and the CIS with nine respondents in favour. In the Asia Pacific region, the next strongest group in support of financial input to under-represented member states was in Asia, with six (26%). However, this data is skewed as there were far many more respondents from AEME (46) than from Asia Pacific (18) and the Americas (14). When all but PFPs were removed from the data, only seven out of 21 (33%) respondents indicated financial support would be appropriate. However, it is still the case that zero respondents said they could provide any financial support to others to participate.

By far the most respondents to this question, 36 (47%) indicated that a buddy system would be appropriate. This is not the same as the mentor process for classification but a twinning or support to under-represented member states and organisations to participate at meetings, facilitate understanding of roles and responsibilities, answer questions that arise and provide guidance on the INSARAG network. In a network that prides itself on solidarity with others this is not surprising and is commendable. Other areas highlighted were awareness raising 9 (12%), training other USAR teams from under-represented countries 6 (8%). Comments highlighted the need for more localisation and the potential for including an aspiring membership as an observer.

We asked PFPs and OFPs if they could provide in-kind support i.e. human resources to other countries to participate more actively in INSARAG? This would, of course include any potential inclusion within a buddy system. Of the 55 who responded, 16 (29%) confirmed they could, 14 (26%) said they couldn't and 25 (46%) said maybe. Others stated that it could happen on a case-by-case basis, only in emergencies, or that it would need approval at a higher level within government. Others indicated that they are already providing in-kind support to other countries. Others would welcome more information sharing by the Secretariat and OCHA around key USAR exercises and training that they are running as there is the potential for them to provide support.

**Recommendation 48:** The INSARAG Secretariat to facilitate a buddy system between existing and prospective members to foster INSARAG participation. The implementation of a quarterly induction process would facilitate greater inclusion, as well as undertaking more awareness raising initiatives. Awareness raising could be undertaken on a regional level, not country level and be a responsibility of the RFP, a troika member or both.

## Inclusivity

The review posed the question of gender diversity and inclusivity within the INSARAG network asking whether in general, are their INSARAG network (not team) representatives i.e. National Focal Points, working group members etc. male, female or non-binary/transgender. Of the 76 respondents to that question, 67 (88%) said they were male, 8 (11%) said they were female, and one person (1%) identified they had a non-binary/transgender representative. When asked if members states and organisations could positively discriminate in favour of female or non-binary/transgender representation within INSARAG fora, such as the ISG or working groups, 45 (60%) said they could and 27 (36%) said they could not. These results are positive.

**Recommendation 49:** the INSARAG network to positively discriminate in favour of women or non-binary/transgender representation within INSARAG fora. Where possible member states and organisations to consider whether they are able to twin female or non-binary/transgender representatives alongside male counterparts.

When asked about gender balance within USAR teams, the results were also promising, whereby 48 respondents (62%) identified that they are able to implement measures to increase participation of female and non-binary/trans people in USAR Teams. The proportion of those who could not was 16 (21%). Comments pointed to the inclusion of women, as opposed to non-binary/trans participation being easier, others that they already have a high percentage of female personnel with teams. Others indicated that it is difficult as the pool from which they have to choose is predominantly male or that selection needs to relate to the skills a person brings to the team, as opposed to their gender. It is not an easy task, however there are opportunities for inclusion identified, such as dog handlers, doctors, nurses, psychologists, translators, coordination and team management.

**Recommendation 50:** the INSARAG network to implement positive discrimination policies in favour of achieving a greater gender balance within USAR teams.

There are very few women within the INSARAG network, but this is improving. Those who are involved, most notably within teams are held up as examples of how gender balance could be achieved. It is important to check-in with anybody in the network, not just women, to ask whether they are happy to be placed in this spotlight.

The review team note that current thinking and organisational commitments revolve around equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), not simply gender diversity and inclusion. EDI seeks to promote fair treatment and full participation of all people, particularly groups who have been historically underrepresented or subject to discrimination on the basis of their identity or disability.

**Recommendation 51:** Whilst this review was specifically tasked with reviewing issues of gender inclusion within the INSARAG network, the network should review inclusion of other under-represented people within INSARAG fora and USAR teams. Broader representation within the network would facilitate greater understanding of the people the network serves. This would also contribute to member states' obligations under GA Resolution 78/199.

The review team repeatedly heard that for many countries, not just in the Global South, that both financial and human resources are limited. One respondent quantified that they had counted 29 meetings in one year. The network has been discussing the potential for having a methodology for flood rescue, similar to that of USAR, due primarily to the increase of hydrometeorological emergencies as part of climate change. Air travel accounts for 5% of global warming<sup>17</sup> and so reducing air travel is a way to contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change. As a network dedicated to emergency response, there should be a responsibility on finding better ways to collaborate that would not contribute to global warming. Online meetings have become the norm and have developed greatly since the COVID-19 emergency forced everybody to communicate online, providing a more inclusive space, providing that they are facilitated effectively, using online tools such as breakout rooms, Miro boards or Google Jamboards, Slido polls etc. The experience at RedR UK, a humanitarian capacity building organisation, highlighted that online training for example can actually be more inclusive, enabling those who may not want to speak up amongst other attendees in a face-to-face environment to direct their comment privately in the chat function to the facilitator. Holding meetings online increases inclusivity, saves time for participants in terms of saved travel days, saves money and contributes extremely little to climate change.

**Recommendation 52:** See the proposal under Network Structure Section to provide a balance of face-to-face and online meetings and invest funds saved through not travelling as much to meetings in securing support for quality online meeting facilitation support (human/software). All tools to be checked for availability in each country.

If proceeding with hybrid, then this needs to have excellent online facilitation skills, ensuring that those online can contribute as effectively as those who participate face-to-face. When both financial and human resources are constrained, it makes sense to streamline and make meetings online or hybrid.

## Global Strategy 2025 - 2030

The current INSARAG Global Strategy incorporates four strategic objectives (SO).

- SO1 Quality Standards - Strengthen global standards for a high quality of national and international USAR response
- SO2 Localisation - Enhance frontline response coordination by localizing INSARAG methodology and concepts

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200218-climate-change-how-to-cut-your-carbon-emissions-when-flying>

- SO3 Flexible Response - Ensure a comprehensive and adaptable humanitarian response by promoting discussions on possible flexible approaches to additional rescue operations, beyond USAR
- SO4 Capacity Building - Boost and develop partnerships for sustainable participation, ownership and governance

Through the survey, we asked the network to identify areas which they felt should be included within the new strategy, allowing multiple responses per person and the results in order of selection were as follows.

<b>Options</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Quality Standards	48	16%
Information Management	34	11%
Information Management	33	11%
Capacity Building	33	11%
Compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines	33	11%
Deployment in complex emergencies	20	7%
Strengthening INSARAG's core functions	18	6%
Localization	17	6%
Partnerships	17	6%
Flood Rescue	17	6%
Innovation in USAR response	16	5%
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	5	2%
Accountability to Affected Populations	4	1%
Other	3	1%

Three of the current four areas within the strategy appear high on the list, however localisation appears eighth. The review team considered that capacity building and localisation are both contributors to achieving quality standards and that a potential merger of those elements should take place. The high placing of both information management and deployment in complex emergencies is related to the findings of the Türkiye/Syria after action review and could represent an urgent need to address these or could be considered a recency bias. When considering any topics for inclusion in the next strategy, the impact on workstreams already underway needs to be considered.

The review team felt that before you could address what themes are included within the new strategy, the network must consider the impact it wants to achieve before considering any of the activities it needs to undertake and critically assess how any of its activities and outputs, contribute to long-term outcomes.

One of the key findings of the review team was that the current strategy does not include any key performance indicators for measuring success. Whilst at global level, network coordination, support to RFPs and IEC/IER classifications are managed, and regional plans work under the heading of the Global Strategy, it is unclear how

activities undertaken contribute to SMART,<sup>18</sup> long-term outcomes and impact measurement. Updates on progress by regional chairs, working groups etc. are not tangible against key performance indicators within the Global Strategy.

As a result, any potential donor or supporter to the network is unable to understand exactly what they are getting for their money and how it contributes to the whole. Most funding arrangements now insist on quantifying results through measurable outputs, such as X people trained in X courses, outcomes such as X new classifiers able to undertake X more classifications per year and impact, such as more lives saved because of teams with higher standards responding to emergencies.

For Policy Focal Points drawn from international cooperation and humanitarian assistance agencies, this is crucial to apportioning funding. In addition, Policy Focal Points, primarily from international cooperation organisations are concerned with all emergency response needs and the entire range of tools used for emergency response, not just USAR. For example, they need to understand the position of USAR vis-à-vis that of other emergency response needs and mechanisms, such as flood rescue, all placed within the global context of climate change and its impact on hydrometeorological disasters. As mentioned previously, earthquakes as a proportion of total hazards will reduce and resources are not predicted to increase substantially. The Global Humanitarian Assistance report 2023 shows that the funding gap has been growing year on year. If INSARAG does not position itself within the global context, it may become less relevant and attract even less funding / support than at present.



Source: Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2023<sup>19</sup>

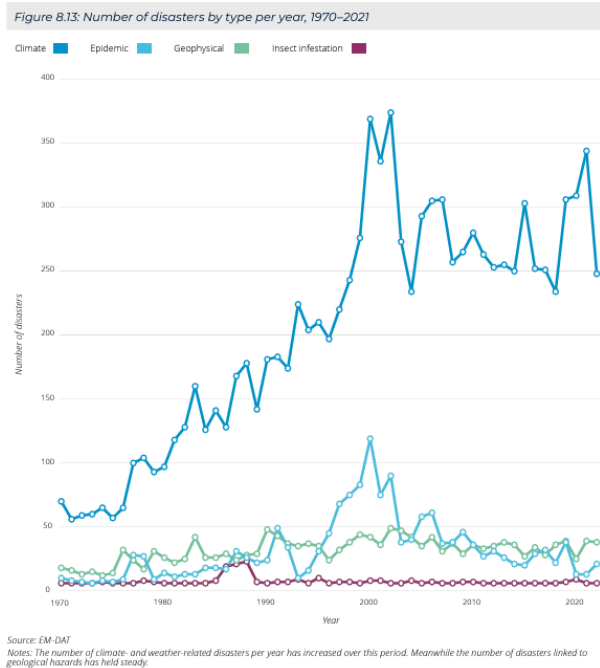
The CRED’s 2006 Statistics report states that between 1987 and 2006, hydrometeorological disasters outnumbered geological disasters by nine (88.89%) to one (11.1%). The IFRC’s 2022 World Disasters Report, which uses CRED-EMDAT data to undertake its analysis states that climate-related hazards continued to increase in 2020–2021, accounting for 90.3% of hydrometeorological disasters compared to 7.3% by geological hazards like earthquakes and volcanic activity. They go onto say that “the number of climate- and weather-related disasters continues to grow, whilst

<sup>18</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound.

<sup>19</sup> [https://devinit-prod-static.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/GHA2023\\_Digital\\_v9.pdf](https://devinit-prod-static.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/GHA2023_Digital_v9.pdf)



geological hazards have remained stable.”<sup>20</sup> As the number of hydrometeorological events rise, the percentage caused by earthquakes will decrease.



Source: IFRC World Disasters Report 2022

The network has already seen the creation of the EMT mechanism, based upon the INSARAG methodology, which has grown to a greater size than INSARAG within the past 15 to 20 years. For example, prior to the Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR) of 2011, the UK government did not invest in emergency medical teams. The HERR identified that USAR teams are infrequently used and that EMTs would provide better value for money across a broader range of emergencies, than just earthquake response. From spending zero on EMTs prior to the HERR, the UK government now spends £11.5 million on maintaining its EMT over five years, compared to £8.5 million on maintaining its USAR team. Since 2017, the UK EMT has been mobilised 29 times;

- 18 were for COVID-19 support
- 2 cyclone responses
- 2 earthquake responses (Nepal 2015, Türkiye 2023)
- 1 measles response
- 1 diphtheria response
- 2 cholera responses
- 1 Ebola technical advisory response
- 1 Ebola outbreak
- 1 flood response
- 1 explosion response

In comparison, the UK International Search and Rescue team (UKISAR) has deployed four times since 2015, including the Nepal earthquake 2015, the Morocco earthquake in 2023, the Türkiye earthquake in 2023 and a flood rescue in Malawi. The insistence of the AEME region not to diversify into other areas of response may well threaten

<sup>20</sup> [www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/2022\\_IFRC-WDR\\_EN.0.pdf.pdf](https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/2022_IFRC-WDR_EN.0.pdf.pdf)

INSARAG's existence entirely as resource scarce member states and organisations are forced to focus elsewhere. It should also be recognised that hydrometeorological disasters are not only impacting the Global South but the Global North also; flooding in Europe has increased and will continue to do so and whilst the Europe region has the EU Civil Protection Mechanism through which it can deploy a range of capacities both within and outside the EU, other regions do not have this capacity. When placed in the context of the localisation agenda, this seems to be a contradiction.

The INSARAG methodology has the potential to be extremely useful within other, non-earthquake response. The rise of the EMTs points to the need to have tools that are more flexible within the current context and a mindset change is potentially needed within the network, in that developing a methodology for flood rescue<sup>21</sup> or for other emergency types is not a dilution of USAR standards but a demonstration of how useful the development of similar standards could be in other contexts, where need is greater and / or more urgent.

In addition, resistance may also be due to the wording within the General Assembly Resolution GA57/150 which underpins the INSARAG network. This resolution has not been amended since it was endorsed. Its preamble stresses concern around all disasters, reflecting on:

- Deep concern for the increasing number and scale of disasters
- Each state's foremost responsibility is the protection of its own population
- All states to undertake disaster preparedness
- That in-country and local rescuers play a critical role

None of that has changed, however the application of this is uneven. Whilst Member states will have been building their own capacity over the past 21 years since the GA Resolution was passed, different levels of ability to protect their own populations exist. The resolution continues with reference to USAR, emphasising:

- The need for timely, coordinated, technically sound USAR response with improved efficient and effective international USAR assistance
- The lives already saved by USAR teams and through UNDAC coordination
- That USAR teams should not be a burden on affected countries

The GA Resolution refers to a report to be submitted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which presumably is now complete and potentially updated, superseded or no longer relevant. It also refers to the need to address customs, air space, communications and administrative procedures etc. and there must have been substantial progress since that time. Are these still relevant? Are other areas now more relevant? In addition, the GA resolution refers to providing the Secretary-General with an update on progress at the fifty-ninth General Assembly in 2005. Again, we assume this has taken place. Is there a responsibility to provide an update on this, 19 years later? The resolution is also out of date as it refers to Member States deploying USAR teams but 21 years post resolution, it is not just Member States but NGOs also.

The resolution goes on to refer to the INSARAG Guidelines as a flexible and helpful reference tool. Guidelines are there to guide and do not need to be adhered to in full,

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<sup>21</sup> Note the term flood rescue is used, not flood response. Flood rescue limits the intervention to immediate lifesaving rescue activities, whereas flood response implies a range of humanitarian interventions such as WASH, protection, livelihoods, shelter etc.

whereas standards need to always be met. This wording provides ambiguity, allowing member states and organisations to pick and choose what they follow and what they don't, although choosing not to is rare. The dedication of achieving high standards is commendable, however, the ambiguity of the wording can be good and bad. Whilst teams may achieve 100% against the standards during a classification or accreditation process at all levels, NAP, IRNAP or IEC/IER, replicating this during an emergency response may not always achieve the 100% required. The wording in the INSARAG Guidelines make allowances for this situation. As noted in the section on accountability and compliance, this flexibility has also led to friction. Should the guidelines remain guidelines but with some element of non-negotiables? Can there be fixed standards within the guidelines?

The resolution endorses increasing participation from a larger number of countries, which has and is being achieved, although again this is inconsistent. As noted previously, there are restrictions on how many can participate due to financial reasons and that seismic risk is not as important as other risks within their countries. The resolution emphasises that affected Member States need to protect international USAR teams and this is closely linked to the issue of deployment into complex emergencies. Considering the findings earlier in this report, where only one member state identified they could deploy into complex emergencies, should this now be revisited to state that there is a responsibility of others to build the capacity of member states in complex emergencies, due to the absence of international support that would be available? Point seven of the resolution provides for exactly that support. It "encourages the strengthening of cooperation among States at the regional and subregional levels in the field of disaster preparedness and response, with particular respect to capacity-building at all levels."

The team were not asked to specifically investigate the relevance of the GA Resolution, however we felt it was a critical part of INSARAG's governance. The resolution talks of all emergency response types before focusing on USAR capacities but it is outdated.

**Recommendation 9:** Consider an update to the General Assembly Resolution as part of the next Global Strategy.

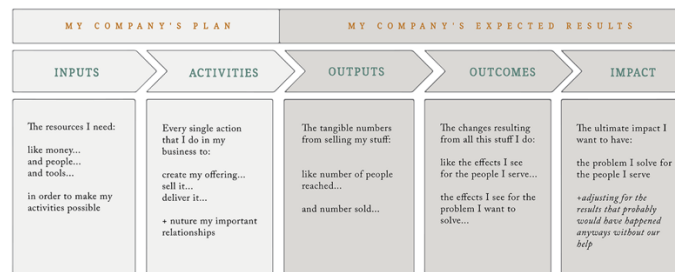
The review team propose that the development of the next Global Strategy follows this four-step process.

1. Policy discussion with the attendance of PFPs globally, plus relevant OCHA staff, including the Chief of RSB, OCHA Regional Office representatives and INSARAG Secretariat. Attendees at this meeting should be high level and be able to commit to supporting the proposals politically, financially and with in-kind support. There should be discussion on whether INSARAG is a disaster management tool which operates separately from the humanitarian system or whether INSARAG is one tool within the wider emergency response / humanitarian system. The discussion also needs to consider changes since GA 57/150 of 2003 and frame USAR within both current and future global humanitarian preparedness and response needs with the objective of identifying a goal for INSARAG for the next five (and possibly ten) years. This could include a potential change to the vision and mission of INSARAG as well as GA Resolution 57/150. It should also take into account GA Resolution 78/199 and accountability to affected populations (AAP).
2. A theory of change (ToC) developed including the problem statement, mission, vision and impact the network wants to see over five years, based on the policy

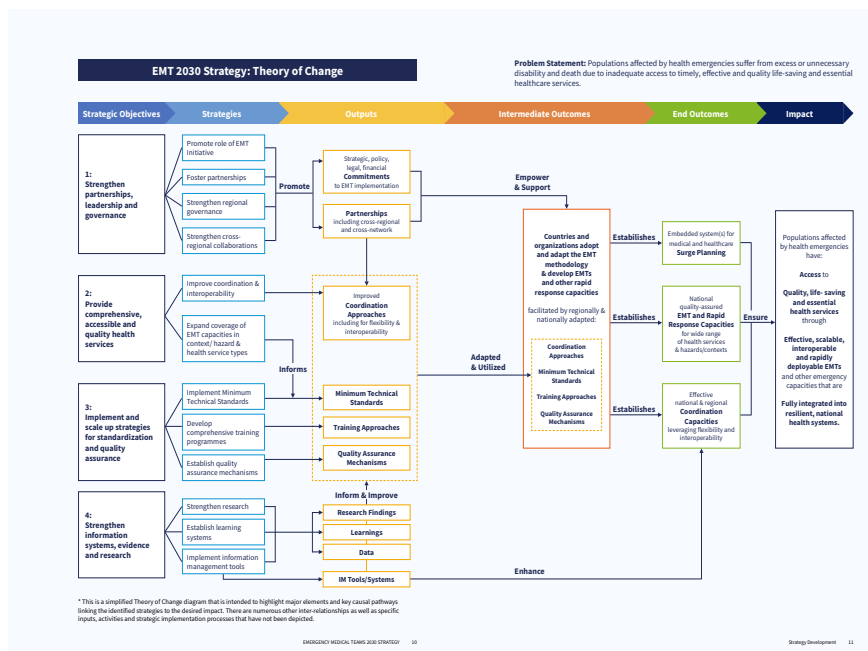
discussion above. Similar mechanisms such as the EMT initiative already have one in place. See example below. This should include SMART indicators, such as medium-term outcomes e.g. X countries better prepared for structural collapse and outputs e.g. X training courses for classifiers. The ToC needs to clearly set out the resources needed to reach their goal, such as money for training courses, software, expert advice etc. and human resources such as PFPs, OFPs, TFPs, Regional Chairs and Vice Chairs, working group members, INSARAG Secretariat staff etc. This will enable the network and OCHA to clearly demonstrate all the resources that will be needed over the course of the strategy and to commit to resourcing those elements. Where not covered, the ToC will enable the identification of resource gaps to be secured via other means, including through the potential creation of mission accounts similar to those used within UNDAC.

### Template Theory of Change

## THEORY of CHANGE



### EMT Theory of Change



### Example INSARAG Theory of Change<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> This is a simplistic version elaborated solely for the purpose of explaining how this could look for INSARAG for USAR response only and should not be considered as perfect.

Problem Statement – how earthquakes affect communities, some countries have their own capacity for structural collapse and others don't, earthquakes can overwhelm national capacity requiring international USAR response.

Context - Creation of INSARAG. Development of USAR standards. Growth of number of organisations in both the Global North and South utilising the INSARAG methodology.

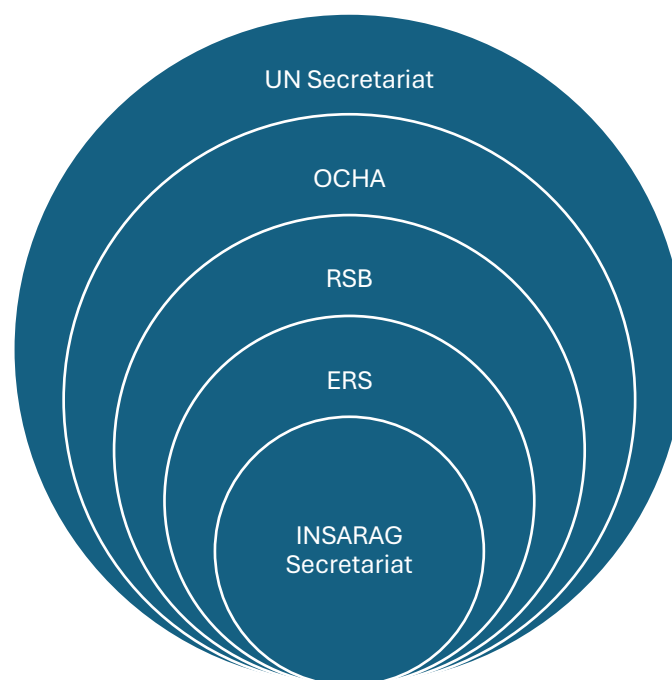
Enablers - what needs to be present or not present to allow the project to succeed. These can be internal (within the network's control) or external (outside their control). The theory of change should also include any caveats and assumptions made in the development of the theory of change.

**OUR VISION** is to save lives by promoting efficiency, enhanced quality and coordination amongst national and international Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams based on adherence to common guidelines and methodologies.

**OUR MISSION** is to prepare for, mobilise and coordinate effective, principled and flexible international USAR assistance in support of countries affected by collapsed structure emergencies, and to actively support capacity- building at the international, regional, national and local level to ensure a localised and coherent response to emergencies.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
X staff in the Secretariat and their cost Training course costs Meeting costs Specialist expertise costs WG members Regional Chairs / Vice Chairs Global Chair X x RFPs and their cost Software licences Evaluators / reviewer costs Web hosting / design costs Knowledge management platform	5 x ISG X x regional meetings per region per year X x TL meetings X x WGs & X x WG meetings (list each type) X x training courses (list each type) Awareness raising Regional engagement X x exercises X x IEC / IER X x NAP/IRNAP X x capacity assessments / mapping X x vulnerable member states supported to build USAR capacity 1 x mid-term review 1 x end 5 year review / evaluation	X x Classifiers trained WG deliverables met Guidelines updated X more OFPs/PFPs in vulnerable / underrepresented countries X x IEC/IER teams in each region X x NAP/IRNAP teams in each region	Able to undertake more IEC / IER / NAP / IRNAP INSARAG has better preparedness and response capacity across all regions INSARAG Guidelines more robust Countries globally are able to respond effectively to emergencies requiring USAR capabilities	More lives saved during structural collapse emergencies Improved resilience of countries affected by earthquakes People affected by collapsed structures are served by interoperable national, regional and international, quality USAR support

3. Have an agreed, clear implementation plan at both global and regional level. Do not deviate from this plan unless you can clearly evidence how new activities or deprioritising others contributes to achieving the impact outlined in the ToC. Be cognisant of the finite resources available within the network or allow for slower progress if a remit is expanded without additional resources provided. Monitor progress against this plan through SMART indicators and effective monitoring and evaluation. Address lack of progress.
4. Seek support from donors to implement this plan. Some of this support will have been pledged at step one but will need to be committed. This element is complicated by OCHA's position within the UN Secretariat (see diagram below), which restricts the use of gratis personnel seconded into OCHA and the INSARAG Secretariat as well as its ability to receive funds in addition to its cost plan. Unearmarked donor funding following Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) principles goes into OCHA finances, not the INSARAG Secretariat, and it is OCHA who apportions funding to ERS. Interested donors could lobby OCHA to apportion more of the unearmarked funding it receives to the INSARAG Secretariat through the OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG). As a network owned by member states, it may be down to the member states to find innovative ways of injecting more resources into the network, such as the creation of INSARAG satellite offices responsible for receiving and distributing funds as a contribution to network progress. It could be staffed either pro-bono or paid, by representatives from member states and INSARAG organisations and operate outside of the UN system in support of the INSARAG network. If it was to channel funding only, a dedicated fund manager could be contracted to manage funding, although that would come at a cost or there may be an organisation already in the network who could undertake this role. Whilst they would not have a UN email address, this may be the only way to support the network in the absence of being able to do so within OCHA as part of the UN Secretariat.



The ad hoc nature of requesting resources for INSARAG activities is hindering its development and increasing workload. Requests for support are often received by potential funders in the middle of their financial year and they are unable to find resources in such a sporadic manner. In addition, many funders are focused on outcomes and impact and the INSARAG network does not have SMART indicators in place to support this requirement. The issue of separating policy and operational level discussion arose time and time again throughout the review. Getting buy-in by policy focal points and those within OCHA at the outset is vitally important.

The policy discussion proposed at step one will assist the network in maintaining relevance within a world of competing and growing demands. If other needs are greater, then that should be considered. The bilateral cooperation, solidarity, and visibility element of USAR response during earthquakes can be replicated in other emergency rescue operations, potentially more often than at present.

## Network Structure

When considering the network structure, the review team considered the following:

- separation of policy and operational discussion
- inclusion of under-represented entities
- decision making authorities, rights, modalities and flows
- regional ownership
- global issues
- communication and information flows
- representation

There are pre-requisites to the structure, which include:

- the responsibility of entities to communicate effectively between each other
- that information needed to inform discussions is distributed in a timely fashion
- that information including decisions made within meetings is distributed to all stakeholders in a timely fashion
- that the meeting calendar makes sense in terms of decision flows required
- that as a peer-to-peer network, contribution is necessary, not just attendance or participation
- that there needs to be trust in the system with those you (s)elect to represent your region

The structure proposes a Global Steering Group (GSG) comprising 12 members, plus INSARAG Secretariat members including the following:

- 1 x Global Chair (no 'voting' rights except as adjudicator)
- 3 x Regional Chairs
- 3 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chairs
- 3 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chairs
- 1 x IFRC (standing invitee / observer status)
- 1 x OCHA RSB Branch Chief
- INSARAG Secretary – Chief ERS (no 'voting' rights)

We recommend four closed meetings per year, three of which would be solely online and one closed, face-to-face/hybrid meeting during the HNPW. Decision made by consensus. The presence of OCHA RSB is to ensure that the INSARAG strategy dovetails with OCHA strategic aims and objectives. The Global Chair presides and has a casting 'vote' in the absence of consensus. The meeting needs to be hybrid to

accommodate those who cannot attend. The representation of the regions is even and addresses the imbalance of voices from regions with more members than others. One region is one 'vote'. Consideration may be given to including an additional independent observer.

Below the Global Steering Group, there is a closed Regional Steering Group (RSG) meeting comprising the Regional Chairs and Incoming and Outgoing Regional Vice-Chairs of each region. This also meets at least four times per year, three of which would be solely online and one face-to-face/hybrid meeting. This enables the Troikas to meet and discuss similarities and differences between the regions arising from the Regional Committees (see below) with the aim of reaching consensus in advance of the GSG. This should include Regional Chairs and Vice-Chairs discussing the views from other regions with Regional Committees. The timing of the meetings needs to inform meetings of the GSG and to take views from the Regional Committees.

Below the Regional Steering Group, there are three Regional Committees (RCs) which follow the existing AEME, Asia Pacific and Americas groupings and which discuss regional policy issues, issues with financial impact and issues of global concern. There should be four meetings per year, three of which are online, one of which is face-to-face/hybrid. They comprise:

- 1 x Regional Chair
- 1 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chair
- 1 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chair
- Policy Focal Points from within the region
- Operational Focal Points from within the region (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x OCHA Regional Office Representative
- Staff from INSARAG Secretariat (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x Regional IFRC representative (standing invitee / observer status)

A representative from relevant OCHA Regional Offices should attend to ensure alignment with regional OCHA policy objectives.

Below the Regional Steering Group, there are five Regional Operational Meetings (ROMs) to reflect the split within the regions that is already taking place. They discuss operational issues and where these convert into issues of global concern or policy or financial impact, it is the responsibility of the Troika to discuss these within the Regional Committees. These are:

- Europe, CIS and Africa
- MENA
- Asia
- Pacific
- Americas

Each meeting comprises:

- 1 x Regional Chair
- 1 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chair
- 1 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chair
- Operational Focal Points from within the region
- Staff from INSARAG Secretariat (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x representative from Team Focal Points within the region (see below)
- 1 x representative (not necessarily the Chair) from the Guidelines Coordination Working Group from within the region (see below)



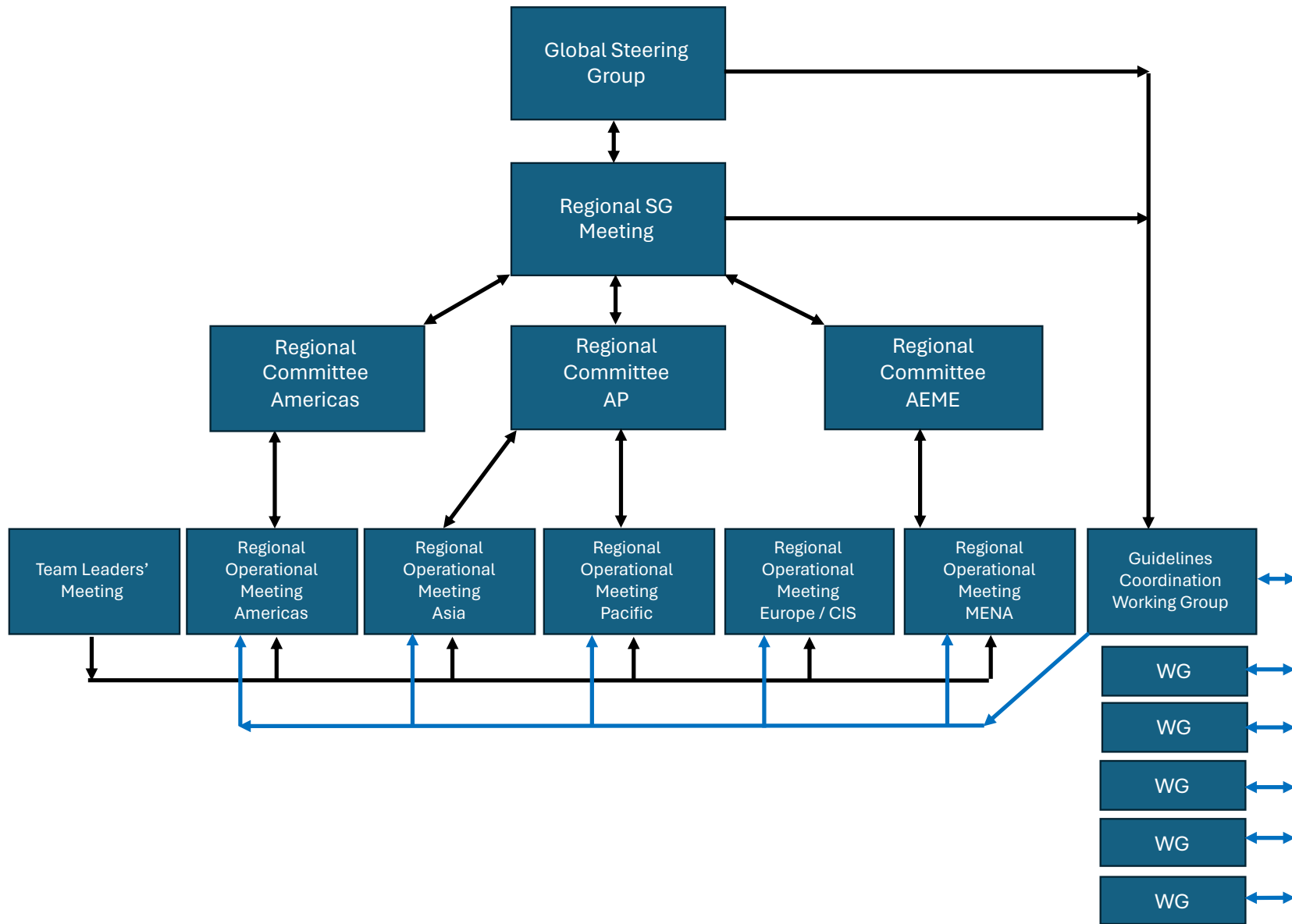
The structure proposes the creation of a permanent Guidelines Coordination working group (GCWG) to replace the Guidelines Review Group (GRG). This group would ensure cooperation and collaboration of all working groups and is responsible for providing information to the Troika in their region for discussion at the Regional Operational Meetings. They are also responsible for monitoring progress of the working groups against agreed plans. The three-year tenure of the Chair of this group and all working groups should stay as per the current INSARAG Guidelines to encourage fresh views but they should not all rotate at the same time as this would affect knowledge management. Ideally the role of Chair should rotate around the three (or five) regions. There is two-way communication between the GCWG and other working groups. The GCWG receives tasks relating to operational issues from the Regional Steering Group and from the Global Steering Group on policy / financial / global concern issues. As working groups comprise representatives across the regions, it is not necessary for the working group Chair to attend Regional Operational Meetings outside of their own region. This responsibility should be delegated to another member of the GCWG from within the region which is holding the meeting. This not only builds the capacity of others within this working group but offsets vast amounts of travel by one person.

The Team Leaders' Meeting meets annually as present and includes TFPs from governmental, NGO, non-classified and classified teams. Meetings should rotate around the three (or five) regions and be face-to-face/hybrid to facilitate inclusivity. The Team Leaders' Meeting (s)elects one representative for each of the three (or five) regions to represent them at the Regional Operational Meetings. Representatives can be from governmental or NGO teams. Regional Team Focal Points (RTFPs) are responsible for communicating with other TFPs from within their region during the year, to seek input prior to and give feedback from Regional Operational Meetings.

As mentioned previously, this structure is predicated on effective communication flows and trust. The INSARAG Secretariat Regional Focal Points (RFPs) will play a big part in making that happen. At present there are not enough RFPs for each of the proposed sub-regions and this review recommends this is addressed as a matter of urgency. This review recognises that there are pinch points at all levels of the system, and increasing the number of staff within the INSARAG Secretariat will facilitate a greater level of support at regional level.

This structure creates space for both policy and operational discussions separately, in meetings of more manageable sizes. In addition, it facilitates the dovetailing of operational issues into policy issues and those of global concern, as well as with the OCHA Strategy. It also provides a voice for TFPs through the creation of a Regional Team Focal Point role, (s)electd by their peers of governmental, non-governmental, classified, and non-classified teams at Regional Operational Meetings.

There will potentially be some scepticism concerning decision-making in smaller fora, however the size of meetings and the issue of policy and operational mix is the driving force behind the proposal. PFPs who feel they have lost a voice through there no longer being an ISG, are of course eligible to contribute and shape what happens through nominating themselves for the role of Regional Chair.



## Conclusion

In its over 30-year history, the INSARAG network has made great progress in improving standards within USAR capacity and the number of members has grown significantly, all with the aim of affording their populations at home protection when faced with emergencies involving structural collapse, most often caused by seismic risk. The deployment of USAR teams internationally to respond to large scale earthquakes that overwhelm a country's capacity to respond has been invaluable and the contribution by the INSARAG network is huge. At the same time, the emergency response sphere in which INSARAG operates has also developed. Member states affected by seismic risk have or are building their own USAR capacity, guided by the INSARAG methodology, whilst others lack the resources to do so. The need to deploy international USAR teams is declining as a share of total emergency response needs, due primarily to the increase of hydrometeorological events caused by climate change. The network is at a critical juncture as to what to do next within this context.

As the network has grown, network management has also become more complex. The INSARAG network is not a UN mechanism but one owned by Member States operating under a UN umbrella, however it includes NGOs who also play a valuable role in USAR response. It is more inclusive in numbers but the entities which comprise the network, such as the ISG have become unmanageable and not representative, with dominance by some member states and the exclusion from decision making of non-member states. The absence of fora for policy discussion is noticeable. Resources to maintain the network and to make progress are scarce and the network is reliant on a small Secretariat housed within OCHA and volunteers from member states and organisations within the network within working groups, regional Troikas, mentors, and classifiers etc.

The INSARAG network is bound by General Assembly Resolution 57/150 which has not been updated since it was endorsed in 2003 and much has changed since that time. The network could be more than the sum of its parts if it was more strategic in the direction in which it needs to travel within the bigger picture of emergency response and the resources it needs.

## Annex A – Governance Review Terms of Reference



# INSARAG Governance Review Proposed Terms of Reference (v. 11 October 2023)



## Summary

<b>Title</b>	Consultancy for an INSARAG Governance Review
<b>Purpose</b>	To conduct a thorough evaluation of INSARAG's governance framework and strengthen the decision-making processes at the policy level by reviewing Volume I (Policy) of the INSARAG Guidelines
<b>Location</b>	Remote
<b>Expected Duration</b>	January 2024 to March 2024 (two months)
<b>Start Date</b>	January 2024 (date TBC)
<b>Reporting to</b>	i) Emergency Response Section Chief and INSARAG Secretary; ii) INSARAG Global Lead and Unit Head, Emergency Response Section (ERS), OCHA Geneva

## Background

The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) is a global network of more than 90 countries and organizations operating within the United Nations humanitarian coordination framework. It was established in 1991 following the joint operations of international urban search and rescue (USAR) teams during the 1985 Mexican earthquake and the 1988 Armenian earthquake.

The overarching objective of INSARAG is to establish globally standardized USAR protocols in order to strengthen disaster response operations. It facilitates the prompt deployment of USAR teams to countries affected by severe structural collapses, predominantly caused by earthquakes.

The INSARAG Guidelines, endorsed by the 2002 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 57/150, serve as the foundation for these endeavors. Considering INSARAG's recent growth and evolving role in international humanitarian response, it is appropriate and timely to analyze the effectiveness of INSARAG's current governance structure.

## Scope of Consultancy

This consultancy has four primary objectives, to:

1. **Review INSARAG Guidelines Volume I (Policy):** Thoroughly examine Volume I (Policy) of the INSARAG Guidelines, focusing on the organizational

structure, roles, and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

2. **Assess INSARAG's Responsiveness and Adaptability:** Assess the responsiveness and adaptability of INSARAG to evolving global challenges and emerging trends in urban search and rescue operations, particularly following the Türkiye and Syria earthquakes in February 2023.
3. **Provide Recommendations and Action Plans:** Based on the findings of the review, highlight recommendations and action plans to address identified gaps and areas of improvement. These may encompass revising the governance structure at all levels i.e., Global, Regional, and Working Group Chairs levels, including reviewing the roles, responsibilities, and tenures of the positions. Further review of their positions with regards to INSARAG decision-making processes is to be included.
4. **Recommend directions for the INSARAG Strategic Plan (2025-2030):** Contribute to a new INSARAG Strategic Plan for the years 2025-2030, incorporating the recommendations resulting from the Governance Review and closely referencing the current 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.

## Contract Deliverables

The consultants will have the following key deliverables:

1. Evaluate INSARAG's development in the past three decades and its alignment with international humanitarian principles, standards, and guidelines – is INSARAG 'fit for purpose, fit for the future?'
2. Consult the INSARAG Troika, Regional and Policy Focal points, develop and review recommendations at the policy level for the following:
  - a. Leadership Structure, Regional Ownership Model, and its linkages with OCHA
  - b. Criteria, tenure, and terms of reference (TORs) of the various Policy and Focal point positions in the network.
  - c. Outline the decision-making mandate and responsibilities at each level, ensuring network wide consultations on issues of global concern.
3. Consult the network to review the key pillars of an extended global strategy for 2025- 2030. This will integrate valuable insights and recommendations derived from INSARAG's series of responses in 2023.
4. On Organizational Structure and Working Processes:
  - a. Identify opportunities to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity of the INSARAG network, its working processes and existing mechanisms.
  - b. Evaluate the effectiveness of the INSARAG's governance structure, including the Steering Group, Regional Groups (currently Americas, Africa Europe and Middle East and Asia-Pacific), Technical Working Groups, and the Team Leaders group, and their relationships with OCHA HQ and Regional and Field offices.
  - c. Conduct an evaluation to review the leadership structure, including an

examination of suitable candidates for the Global Chair. The assessment may involve discussions on the viability of a nation retaining the role versus implementing a rotational approach. For instance, Switzerland has been the Global Chair since INSARAG's inception in 1991. Detailed guidelines on the specifications for future positions, including their qualifications, responsibilities, and tenure of service

- d. Provide recommendations on whether the new governance structure can ensure compliance and accountability of deployed teams in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines.
5. On Membership:
- a. Assess the conditions and criteria for membership in INSARAG, including the application process and qualification requirements.
  - b. Review the geographical diversity and representation of member countries and organizations and identify potential areas for improvement.
  - c. Assess the current level of gender inclusivity within the INSARAG network (Steering Group, three Regional Groups, Technical Working Groups, and the Team Leaders Group) and deployment teams. Considering representation, participation, and leadership roles, suggest ways to ensure greater gender inclusivity in the composition of deployment teams, USAR operations, and within the INSARAG network.

## Methodology

The consultant will employ a robust methodology to accomplish the objectives, including:

1. Reviewing relevant INSARAG documents, including the INSARAG Guidelines, INSARAG reports, previous network meeting summaries, and other relevant information on the INSARAG website.
2. Conducting interviews, surveys, and consultations with key stakeholders, including affected communities, INSARAG Focal points from member countries, partner organizations, donors, and relevant experts.
3. Analyzing the collected data to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in the current governance structure and processes.
4. Developing recommendations and an actionable roadmap to enhance INSARAG's governance structure, and membership conditions.
5. The consultant will provide an interim report outlining the preliminary findings and recommendations for feedback and validation. A final report containing a comprehensive review of INSARAG's governance structure and a draft for the new Strategic Plan for 2025-2030 will then be presented.

## Duration

The consultancy is for a period of two months. A specific timeline for completing the review, including milestones and key deliverable dates will be mutually agreed upon with the INSARAG Secretariat.

## Management and Supervision

The consultant/s will report directly to the Chief of ERS OCHA and INSARAG Secretary, and the INSARAG Global Lead. They will maintain regular communication throughout the review process. Any significant issues or challenges encountered during the review should be promptly communicated and addressed.

## Required Qualifications and Experience

The external consultant/s should possess the following qualifications:

1. Demonstrated expertise in disaster response, a good understanding of OCHA's

Emergency Response Tools and Services and the INSARAG network.

2. Previous humanitarian work experience at a senior level is desired, with a broad overview of national disaster response authorities, the localization agenda, and international response arrangements in major disasters.
3. Strong analytical skills and proven experience in conducting research, data analysis, and stakeholder consultations are necessary.
4. Experience in drafting and developing organizational reviews would be an advantage.
5. Fluency in written and spoken English is required.

### Remuneration

The research will span a period of two months. To facilitate effective collaboration and seamless execution of the project, **three consultants**, one from each of the INSARAG regions, are proposed to undertake the work and offered a consultation fee of USD\$400 (average rate for a senior consultant in the UN) per working day, and each consultant would receive  $400 \times 21(\text{days}) \times 2(\text{months})$  totaling USD\$16,800 per consultant. **The total amount requested from donors, who can contribute in part, will be in the region of USD\$50,400.** The fees cover research and data collection, analysis, preparation, and delivery of recommendations in a final report for the INSARAG Steering Group.

The Secretariat will consult the Global Chair and Regional network donors for support.

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*Drafted by the INSARAG Secretariat*

## Annex B – Key Informant Interview List

N	Name	Organization / Post	Country
1	Dewey Perks	PFP / OFP / Training WG Chair	USA
2	Martin Evers	OFP / GRG Co-Chair	The Netherlands
3	John Cawcutt	GRG Co-Chair	Australia
4	Sebastian Mocarquer	National Capacities WG Co-Chair	Chile
5	David Sochor	OFP / Quality Assurance WG Co-Chair	Switzerland
6	Annika Coll	OFP / Quality Assurance WG Co-Chair	Spain
7	Anthony Macintyre	Medical WG Co-Chair	USA
8	Christophe Schmachtel	WHO	Switzerland
9	Joe Bishop	Senior INSARAG expert	UK
10	Flavio Salio	WHO	Italy
11	Terje Skavdal	Senior INSARAG expert	Norway
12	Peter Muller	OCHA UNDAC	
13	Peter Wolff	Medical WG Co-Chair	Germany
14	Mario Ordeñana	OFP, Regional Troika Americas	Ecuador
15	Shelley Cheatham	Head of OCHA Regional Office Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC)	Panama
16	Lucia Vilariño	American Firefighters Organization (OBA)	Argentina
17	Agustin Orengo	OCHA Head of Operations Regional Office Asia Pacific (ROAP)	
18	Ted Pearn	Senior INSARAG expert	United Kingdom
19	Arjun Katoch	Senior INSARAG expert	India
20	Giovanni Quacquarella	OCHA Head of Emergency Preparedness and Response Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa (ROSEA)	
21	Francisco Santamaria	OFP	Panama
22	Devora Luzzi	OFP, Regional Troika Americas	Argentina
23	Roland Hendricks	OFP	South Africa
24	Belit Taşdemir	AKUT	Türkiye
25	Alexander Hönel	IRO	Germany
26	Roberto Colombo Llimona	Head of Unit (IM) OCHA	Africa
27	Cem Behar	GEA Search and Rescue Team	Türkiye
28	Philippe Besson	PUI	France
29	Alain Choplain	PUI	France
30	Gary Francis	SARAID	United Kingdom
31	Vasily Evseev	OFP	Russia
32	Silvio Flueckiger	PFP	Switzerland
33	Fahad Sultan T S Al-Hajri	OFP	Qatar
34	Vlad Petre	EUCPM	Belgium
35	Marcin Kedra	EUCPM	Poland
36	Navin Balakrishnan	OFP	Singapore



37	Col. Raza Iqbal	OFP, Regional Troika Asia Pacific	Pakistan
38	Ian Duncan	OFP, Regional Troika Asia Pacific	New Zealand
39	Jeremy Stubbs	Flood Rescue WG Co-Chair	Australia
40	Brad Commens	OFP	Australia
41	Vladimir Vlcek	PFP, Regional Troika AEME	Czechia
42	Marius Dogeanu	PFP, Regional Troika AEME	Romania
43	Meg Northrope	PFP	Australia
44	Charlie Mason	PFP	UK
45	Ghayas Al Mokhtar	OFP/PFP	Lebanon
46	Sawsan Bou Fakherddine	OFP/PFP	Lebanon
47	David Norlin	OFP	Sweden
48	Ove Syslak	OFP	Norway
49	Yuka Tani	OFP	Japan

## Annex C – Bibliography

### Title

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ISG 2013 – Annex A – Participant List  
ISG 2013 – Annex B – ISG Agenda  
ISG 2013 – Annex C – Governance Decisions  
ISG 2013 – Annex D – Guidelines Review ToR  
ISG 2019 Chairman Summary  
ISG Decision Matrix 2019  
ISG 2020 Chairman Summary  
ISG 2020 - Annex D – Decision Matrix  
ISG 2021 Chairman Summary – Includes decisions matrix  
Issues for Decision at the ISG 2021  
ISG 2022 Chairman Summary – Includes decisions matrix  
ISG 2023 Chairman Summary  
Annex B – Strategy 2021-2026 PowerPoint Presentation  
Annex D – Outcomes from the Breakout Sessions  
INSARAG Guidelines Vol I  
INSARAG Guidelines Vol I – Annex D – Explanatory Note on TRL and INSARAG Guidance Note  
INSARAG Guidelines Volume II - Manual A: Capacity Building  
INSARAG Guidelines Volume II - Handbook B: Preparedness and Response  
INSARAG Guidelines Volume II - Handbook C: IEC IER  
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GA Resolution 57/150

INSARAG Strategic Plan 2021 - 2026

UNDAC Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

INSARAG Global Meeting Chairman Summary 2010

INSARAG Global Meeting Chairman Summary 2015

INSARAG Global Meeting Chairman Summary 2021

3<sup>rd</sup> GRG Summary 2019

4<sup>th</sup> GRG Summary 2019

5<sup>th</sup> GRG Summary 2019

6<sup>th</sup> GRG Summary 2019

7<sup>th</sup> GRG Summary

GRG 2020 Co-Chair Write Up

Annex A – Feedback on Guidelines 2020

Brief of GRG Update 2020

GRG Terms of Reference 2023 - 2025

GRG Meeting Minutes May 2023 Online

GRG Meeting Minutes August 2023 Brisbane

GRG Meeting Minutes October 2023 Qatar

AEME Regional Meeting 2019 Summary

AEME Regional Meeting 2020 Summary

AEME Regional Meeting 2021 Summary

AEME Regional Meeting 2022 Summary

AEME Regional Meeting 2023 Summary

Annex D AEME Meeting 2023 Breakout Group Summaries

AP Regional Meeting 2019 Summary

AP Regional Meeting 2020 Summary

AP Regional Meeting 2021 Summary

AP Regional Meeting 2022 Summary

AP Regional Meeting 2023 Summary

Americas Regional Meeting 2019 Summary

Americas Regional Meeting 2020 Summary

Americas Regional Meeting 2021 Summary

Americas Regional Meeting 2022 Summary

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Flood Response-Americas Technical Proposal\_EN  
Flexible Response Group Discussion Paper 2022  
INSARAG External Classification and Reclassification (IEC/IER) Review 2020  
Regional Emergency Medical Team (EMT) Working Group in the South-East Asia region  
Actioning the Emergency Medical Teams' Initiative In The WHO African Region: Strategic Paper  
Implementation of the EMT Initiative in the Americas  
Global Meeting 2010 Agenda  
Global Meeting 2015 Chairman's Summary  
Global Meeting 2020 Agenda  
INSARAG Guidelines Volume 1 2015

Disasters in Numbers 2022 - UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)  
and the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)

World Disasters Report 2022 – The International Federation of the Red Cross  
and Red Crescent Societies

Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability 2024

Annual Disaster Statistical Review: Numbers and Trends 2006, CRED

Global Humanitarian Overview 2024

## Annex D – Proposed Changes to Vol I

This table represents the review team’s comments on changes to Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines, however a final version is not possible as many of the changes proposed are subject to approval at the ISG 2024 and this table should therefore be read in comparison with the Recommendations Table (Annex E). These changes have been reviewed in tandem with the Guidelines Review Group and a separate document including GRG comments will be submitted to the GRG to take forward.

Section	Change Proposed
Foreword	Guidelines say - The International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) was established in 1990 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. Spell out USAR acronym
1.1	Guidelines say - The guidelines also outline the role of the UN in assisting affected countries in on-site coordination. Spell out UN acronym
2.2	Add information on the Warsaw Declaration
2.4	Potential merger of inclusiveness, diversity and cultural sensitivity
2.5	Potential to Include the ToRs for each role here – they aren’t long and would mean people didn’t have to keep switching to Annex A.
N/A	If it is agreed that the Global Meeting will continue, add a new section on Global Meeting to explain who attends, whether decisions are made – i.e. no. Clarification of endorsements of declarations
Annex A	There are no ToRs in Annex A for WG Chairs, TL Representatives and NGO Team Representatives. These should be included
2.5.2	Title says - <b>INSARAG Steering Group</b> Add (ISG) after the full name
2.5.2	Guidelines say - INSARAG Steering Group is an open meeting, presided by the Global Chair, in which policy topics are being discussed amongst the Policy Focal Points of all Member States. However, discussions take place not just between Policy Focal Points but all invitees and probably those who are not invited. Clarify wording to say - INSARAG Steering Group is an open meeting, presided by the Global Chair, in which policy topics are discussed amongst ISG members of all INSARAG Member States and organisations and where decisions are taken by consensus by Member States’ National Policy Focal Points
2.5.2	Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.2	Says - The ISG Meeting comprises a Meeting of the Global and Regional Chairs, where the Global, Regional and Working Groups’

	Chairs and the INSARAG Secretariat meet to finalise the discussions on decisions of the past year and to prepare the ISG General Meeting. Unclear – what is the ISG General Meeting? Do they prepare the next ISG at the current one? Or does it mean Global Meeting?
2.5.2	Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.3	Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.4	Clarification needed on whether Team Leaders are the same as Team Focal Points. If they are different, then additional ToRs required at Annex A.
2.5.6	Clarify that AEME's administration is further sub-divided and has separate RFPs
2.5.6	Guidelines say - The Regional Groups work to ensure that the strategic direction and policies from the Steering Group are implemented, and to assimilate relevant information from participating Member States for submission back to the Steering Group. Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.6	Include ToRs for Regional Chair and Vice Chair here instead of in Annex B
2.5.6	Guidelines say - The Regional Groups are responsible for the implementation of the Steering Group decisions at the regional level, as well as for carrying out the regional annual work programme and activities planned for the region. Clarify that Regional Groups also propose recommendations for agreement at the ISG as per the graphic at 2.5.1 Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.6	Guidelines say - Since 2010 in Kobe, Japan, and once every five years, all Regional Groups come together in the INSARAG Global Meeting where the network convenes with the objective of strengthening the global network, thereby ensuring that it is fit for purpose in today's rapidly changing world. If not discontinued, create a separate section on Global Meeting which explains attendance, whether decisions are made, how they are reached and the declarations
2.5.7	Consistency of terminology – ISG v Steering Group Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.5.7	Guidelines say - Each Working Group has a chair, and two or three members nominated from each region to ensure a full, worldwide perspective on technical or operational issues raised by the USAR Team Leaders Meetings. Include that WG now have a Co-Chair arrangement See first paragraph in this section. WGs are not only formed through issues raised at TL meetings

2.5.8	See note above on difference between USAR Team Leader and Focal Point
2.5.9	Technically as INSARAG was created by a GA Resolution, all member states are automatically members of INSARAG. Clarify that participation in INSARAG is voluntary
2.5.9	Guidelines say - INSARAG Members States are invited to meetings of the relevant INSARAG Regional Group and USAR Team Leaders, and to participate in the Working Groups which are made up of suitable experts nominated by the Team Leaders and Regional Groups and are supported by their respective sponsoring organisations. Clarify – they are also invited to the ISG and Global Meeting Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.6	Guidelines say - INSARAG Member States with USAR Teams deploying internationally are encouraged to undertake an IEC, however, this is not a requirement to be a member of the INSARAG network. As a first step, teams are encouraged to undertake the National Accreditation Process (NAP) and the INSARAG Recognised National Accreditation Process (IRNAP). See details in Volume II, Manual A: Capacity Building. Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.6.1	Guidelines say - earthquake response simulation exercises Add acronym – ERE
2.6.2.	Policy Focal Point – Guidelines say - The Policy Focal Point normally sits in the central institution or agency of the national disaster management structure or in the agencies responsible for international cooperation and humanitarian response, and represents the Member State on USAR policy matters in the Regional Group and, <b>as appropriate</b> , in the INSARAG Steering Group. Remove the words – <b>as appropriate</b> . They are the key person to be at the ISG as the only one mandated to make decisions. Clarify that Policy Focal Points are also eligible to attend the Global Meeting. Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.6.2	Include ToRs for both Policy and Operational focal point here and delete Annex A.
2.6.2	Guidelines say - The Operational Focal Point should normally have USAR responsibilities as part of their daily functions. They represent the Member State primarily on operational USAR matters in INSARAG meetings (Team Leaders and Regional meetings), workshops and events. Clarify that they may also represent their member state at the ISG and Global Meeting but do not take decisions.



	Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.6.2	Operational Focal Points not currently invited to the ISG but in reality they do need to participate. Subject to change, pending decision at the ISG 2024
2.6.2	As above. Clarify if the TL is the same as the TFP. If they are different, create ToRs for each.
2.6.2	Guidelines say - The responsibilities of INSARAG Focal Points can be described as ensuring the efficient information exchange and validation at the appropriate levels in the preparedness and response phases on USAR matters, including capacity building, trainings, policy matters, emergency alerts, requests or acceptance of assistance, mobilisation and provision of international assistance. Change to say <b>all</b> INSARAG Focal Points. Clarify that there should be only one PFP and OFP per member state / organisation
2.6.2	Guidelines say - The designation of the Policy and Operational Focal Points is at the discretion of the <b>government</b> , in line with its respective disaster management structure and serve as a point-of-contact between the <b>national government</b> and the INSARAG network, including the INSARAG Secretariat, and the Regional and Steering Groups. Change to say member state. Ensure that the correct / same terminology is used throughout
2.6.3	Guidelines say - To be part of the USAR Directory, teams need the endorsement of their Member State's Policy Focal Point. Teams can request registration by the Secretariat via their respective Policy Focal. Add the word Point at the end of the sentence
2.6.4	Guidelines say - The key difference between these two is that the materials residing in the Technical Reference Library is non-binding unlike those in the Guidance Notes. Either change to material residing or are non-binding. Grammar
2.6.4	Guidelines say - INSARAG endorsed documents, such as the guidelines annexes, IEC/IER Checklists and USAR Coordination (UC) Manual, <b>would be placed</b> under the Guidance Notes, while the Technical Reference Library is a knowledge repository for best practices that has been endorsed for sharing by the respective national Operational Focal Point and the respective INSARAG Working Group. Replace would be placed, with - are located under Guidance Notes or are located within the Guidance Notes Section. Grammar
2.6.4	Guidelines say - <b>Note:</b> The information shared in the Technical Reference Library are good practices that are effective and beneficial to specific teams. Amend to – information is best practice that is effective

2.7	<p>Guidelines say - Since the first HNPW, INSARAG has taken an active part in the event and organises several meetings during this week, enabling the sharing of expertise from all over the INSARAG network. The week is thus an occasion to gather experts <b>and to make decisions on the future of INSARAG</b>, as well as an opportunity to welcome new partners (refer to INSARAG guidance roles on <a href="http://www.insarag.org">www.insarag.org</a> for details on engaging and operating with the parties listed above).</p> <p>Wording sounds like whether INSARAG should continue or not. Suggested wording - The week is thus an occasion to gather experts, discuss and agree on INSARAG issues, as well as an opportunity to welcome new partners</p>
2.8	<p>Guidelines say - The principal considerations of the review are that the final product should reflect an evolution in practice rather than a revolution, embrace new technology and development and act as a lean and easy reference material for policy- and decision-makers as well as USAR Teams for training, preparedness and field operations.</p> <p>Add that this covers operational issues as well.</p> <p>Suggested wording – reference material for focal points to enable decision making, and USAR Teams for training, preparedness and field operations.</p>
3	Amend second sentence to start – This Resolution
3.1	<p>Guidelines say - International rescue teams respond in the days after the event and following an official request by the affected government for international assistance.</p> <p>Should this be amended to say that at times international teams deploy in advance of a request for assistance? Whilst not advocated, recommended, part of the guidelines etc., this is a reality. This wording could say that INSARAG strongly advises any USAR Team not to deploy in advance of a request for assistance</p>
3.3	<p>Guidelines say - This would be coordinated by the INSARAG Secretariat between the requesting country and USAR experts from the INSARAG network sponsored by their governments / organisations.</p> <p>Amend wording to – This is coordinated by the INSARAG Secretariat</p>
3.4	<p>Guidelines say - One of the critical aspects in developing the national capacity is the establishment of a NAP for the USAR Teams.</p> <p>Remove the word the – developing national capacity, not developing <b>the</b> national capacity and NAP for USAR Teams not NAP for <b>the</b> USAR Teams</p>
3.4	<p>Guidelines say - The national accreditation is a process in which the achievement of national standards is certified by an accrediting entity (i.e. the competent national authorities).</p> <p>Replace - The national accreditation by – The NAP is</p>

<p>NAP Graphic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of mentor – missing parenthesis</li> <li>• Use either entity or body - not both - gets confusing</li> <li>• Remove capitalisation of portfolio of evidence</li> <li>• Under Audit and Assessment, change review of the portfolio of evidence, to amend. Review suggests look at only, rather than make changes?</li> <li>• Under Accreditation – add that the team will be included in the main INSARAG USAR Directory (if that is the case)</li> </ul>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>Guidelines say - Regions are encouraged to form Technical Support Groups (TSGs) and Technical Recognition Groups (TRGs), as it is a peer-review process.</p> <p>If there are no ToRs for these groups, these should be developed and included here.</p>
<p>3.5</p>	<p>Guidelines say - Accrediting Member States are required to report to the INSARAG Secretariat on successful nationally- accredited teams, details of which will be updated in the INSARAG USAR Directory. (For more information on building national USAR capacity and the IRNAP, please refer to Volume II, Manual A: Capacity Building).</p> <p>Should this go under 3.4 instead? Is this referring to NAP teams or IRNAP Teams? Do NAP teams go on the main INSARAG Directory or only IRNAP Teams? This section is confusing and needs to be re-written.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Guidelines say - This will augment the country’s disaster management capacity by analysing national risks and identify possible gaps. The mechanism would enhance the coordination effort of receiving and deploying international assistance (i.e. USAR Teams, logistics, etc.) at pre-identified locations (i.e. borders, airports, shipping terminals etc.) and identify priorities to report to the international community. When developing its national receiving mechanism, it is useful for countries to take reference to UN General Assembly resolution 57/150 that “the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.”</p> <p>Suggested amendment to wording - This augments the country’s disaster management capacity by analysing national risks and identifying possible gaps and enhances the coordination effort of receiving and deploying international assistance (i.e. USAR Teams, logistics, etc.) at pre-identified locations (i.e. borders, airports, shipping terminals etc.) and identifying priorities to report to the international community. When developing its national receiving mechanism, it is useful for countries to refer to UN General Assembly resolution 57/150 which states that “the affected State has the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory.”</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Guidelines say - USAR involves the location, extrication, and initial stabilisation of people trapped in a confined space or under debris due</p>

	<p>to a sudden-onset large-scale structural collapse such as an earthquake, in a coordinated and standardised fashion.</p> <p>Amend to - USAR involves coordinated and standardised location, extrication and initial stabilisation of people trapped in a confined space or under debris due to a sudden-onset, large-scale structural collapse such as an earthquake.</p>
4.2	<p>Guidelines say - <b>Phase II – Mobilisation:</b> The mobilisation phase is the period immediately following the occurrence of a disaster. International USAR Teams prepare to respond and travel to deploy and assist the affected country requesting international assistance.</p> <p>Amend to - <b>Phase II – Mobilisation:</b> The mobilisation phase is the period immediately following the occurrence of a disaster. International USAR Teams prepare to respond and travelling to assist the affected country requesting international assistance.</p>
4.2	<p>Guidelines say - Phase III – Operations: The operations phase is the period when international USAR Teams are performing USAR operations in the affected country. In this phase international USAR Teams arrive and register at the <b>RDC</b> or the <b>UCC</b> in the affected country, and conduct USAR operations in line with the operational objectives of the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA). If necessary and requested by the LEMA, the team can be involved in “beyond the rubble” activities.</p> <p>First use of RDC and UCC acronym. Spell out first.</p> <p>Might be useful to explain the concept of beyond the rubble. Give examples.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Phase IV – Demobilisation:</b> The demobilisation phase is the period when international USAR Teams have been instructed that USAR operations are to cease. USAR Teams commence withdrawal, coordinating their departure through the UCC, and then depart from the affected country through the RDC.</p> <p>USAR teams can demobilise before USAR operations cease. Might be useful to clarify.</p>
4.2	<p>Guidelines say - <b>Phase V – Post-Mission:</b> The post-mission phase is the period immediately after a USAR Team has returned home. In this phase the USAR Team is required to complete and submit a post-mission report and conduct an After Action Review in order to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency for response to future disasters. Figure 8 illustrates the INSARAG international USAR response cycle.</p> <p>Submit the mission report to whom? INSARAG, their member state? Vol 2 Man B 4.5 – Mission Report to go to OCHA within 45 days. Copy this data into Volume 1 for clarity.</p> <p>Clarify whether there is guidance as to what an AAR should cover. If a set of core data to collect and analyse is agreed, this would help the network to</p>

	compare each team's deployments during any given response and to compare and analyse across responses and through time.
4.3.1	<p>Guidelines say - Potentially affected countries are encouraged to have a national disaster response mechanism in place such that in the first hours they are able, through their initial response and assessments, to make a decision and announce whether or not the situation is overwhelming, and, therefore, warrants immediate support from international USAR Teams.</p> <p>Wording needs clarification - At risk countries? At risk member states?</p>
4.3.1	<p>Guidelines say - As a first priority, affected countries should provide timely information on the scope of the emergency, national response efforts and potential USAR requirements – and keep the VOSOCC updated, either by affected country or INSARAG secretariat.</p> <p>Clumsy wording. Suggest amend to - As a first priority, affected countries should provide timely information on the scope of the emergency, national response efforts and potential USAR requirements, either through updating the VOSOCC updated or by contacting the INSARAG secretariat.</p>
4.3.1	<p>Guidelines say - Affected countries can formally request assistance through their UN Resident Coordinator's Office, the OCHA Regional or Country Office, directly through the INSARAG Secretariat or bilaterally to countries with whom it may have agreements. In the latter case, affected countries are encouraged to coordinate with and inform the INSARAG Secretariat of the response requirements.</p> <p>Suggest amend to - Affected countries can formally request assistance through their UN Resident Coordinator's Office, the OCHA Regional or Country Office, directly through the INSARAG Secretariat or bilaterally to countries with whom it may have agreements. If requesting assistance bilaterally, affected countries are encouraged to coordinate with and inform the INSARAG Secretariat of response requirements.</p>
4.3.1	<p>Guidelines say - Countries have the option to request specific USAR Teams in Light, Medium and/or Heavy configurations, as required for disaster response. This request needs to be stated on VOSOCC at the earliest opportunity after an event.</p> <p>Countries? Member States? Needs consistency of terminology</p>
4.3.1	<p>Guidelines say - One of the affected country's main responsibilities is to ensure that its LEMA is functional during the disaster so as to exercise its primary role in initiating, coordinating and organising the international humanitarian assistance on their territories, and that they have overall responsibility for the command, coordination and management of the response operation. This includes having RDCs prepared and operational, locations for Bases of Operations and/or OSOCC/UCC planned.</p> <p>First use of LEMA – acronym</p> <p>First use of OSOCC – acronym</p>

	Add BoO acronym
4.3.1	Guidelines say - Preliminary sectors can be established in the preparation phase also. Introduces a technical term – preliminary sectors – may need explanation
4.3.2	Guidelines say - They may coordinate their assistance bilaterally with the affected country or through a regional organisation, such as the European Union or the Association of South East Asian Nations. Might be useful to included CDEMA instead of the EU – more likely. Add ASEAN acronym
4.3.2	Guidelines say - A Member State or member organisation may also decide to channel their support through the UN agencies or NGOs. Humanitarian partners in-country normally set up a coordination process (e.g. through clusters) in support of the affected country. Need to clarify the difference between a member state or member organisation. Might be useful to briefly explain the clusters? –
4.3.3	INSARAG Classified USAR Teams It feels quite weird only now introducing the USAR Teams. Consider moving this earlier in the document.
4.3.3	Guidelines say - Classified USAR Teams prepare for international deployment by maintaining their capability in a state of readiness for rapid international deployment. Amend to - Classified USAR Teams prepare for rapid international deployment by maintaining their capability in a state of readiness.
4.3.4	If move 4.3.3 up, this should move up also
4.3.4	Guidelines say - They also need to access and control utilities such as electricity and water and detect hazardous materials (hazmat). They assess and stabilise damaged structures. Such teams are also adaptable when working in challenging environments and can support in assessments, debris removal, victim search, medical assessments/treatment. Clarify the difference between having hazmat capability to ensure the safety of their teams compared to responding to a hazmat event. Potential to mention beyond the rubble activities?
4.3.4	Guidelines say - Undertaking early relief operations prior or jointly in support of other humanitarian systems. Might be useful to explain what this could entail
4.3.4	Guidelines say - These tasks must be needs driven, requested and coordinated by the LEMA or a respective agency, and must include from the beginning a clearly defined exit strategy.

	Amend wording to - These tasks must be needs driven, requested and coordinated by the LEMA or a relevant agency, approved by the deploying Member state and from the outset must include a clearly defined exit strategy.
4.3.4	<p>Guidelines say - If they are the first coordination resource to arrive in an affected country, these teams are also able to set up the RDC and the UCC, if not already established by the national authorities, and to assist the national authorities in coordinating incoming international resources.</p> <p>Suggest amend wording to - If they are the first coordination resource to arrive in an affected country, these teams are obliged to set up the RDC and the UCC, if not already established by the national authorities, and to assist the national authorities in coordinating incoming international resources.</p>
4.3.4	<p>Guidelines say - They will establish a Base of Operations (BoO) that will support the teams for the duration of the response and serve as the communications hub for the team's operations.</p> <p>OK to use BoO acronym as included earlier</p>
4.3.4	<p>Guidelines say - When USAR Teams augment the UCC in the OSOCC and the humanitarian coordination structure (which includes civil-military coordination platform) with personnel, they should understand the existing LEMA coordination structure and the civil-military coordination platform in place and/or the request for assistance being facilitated/coordinated by the UN Civil-Military Focal Point in the UNDAC team.</p> <p>Suggest amend wording to - When USAR Teams augment the UCC in the OSOCC they should endeavour to understand the existing LEMA coordination structure and any civil-military coordination structure that's already in place.</p>
4.3.4	<p>Guidelines say - International responders need to consider the cultural, ethical, and moral differences of the country in which they are providing assistance.</p> <p>Remove moral?</p>
4.3.5	<p>Guidelines say - The UNDAC team, as manager of the OSOCC, assists the LEMA with the coordination of international response (e.g. the humanitarian clusters, EMTs, USAR, etc.), assessments of priority needs and information management by establishing, amongst other structures, an OSOCC and RDC, when required.</p> <p>Just say clusters?</p>
4.3.6	<p>Guidelines say - The RDC is established to coordinate <b>the</b> incoming international USAR Teams and other humanitarian assistance, and reports this to the LEMA through the OSOCC.</p> <p>Suggest removing '<b>the</b>' in between coordinate and incoming</p>

4.3.7	<p>Guidelines say - The OSOCC coordinates international responders and supports the initial inter-cluster coordination mechanisms such as health, water, sanitation, and shelter.</p> <p>Suggest amend wording - The OSOCC coordinates international responders and supports initial inter-cluster coordination.</p> <p>If you explain clusters before, then this wording is shorter.</p>
4.3.10	<p>Guidelines say - Note: USAR Teams can access detailed information in Volume II, Manual B: Operations. GDACS and the VOSOCC can be accessed at <a href="http://www.gdacs.org">www.gdacs.org</a> and <a href="https://vosocc.unocha.org/">https://vosocc.unocha.org/</a> respectively.</p> <p>Remove accesses, replace by accessed</p>
5.1	<p>Guidelines say - Prior to the introduction of the INSARAG External Classification System, USAR Teams completed a self- classification as a Light, Medium or Heavy USAR Team. This self-classification was then submitted to the INSARAG Secretariat and recorded in its Directory of International USAR Teams. INSARAG strongly recommends Member States to establish a NAP as an initial step.</p> <p>The last sentence is out of place here. This is referring to something in the past. Delete.</p>
5.1	<p>Guidelines say - In 2005, the INSARAG network supported the establishment of independently verifiable, operational standards for international USAR Teams through the IEC/R process, and encourages all Member States with USAR Teams to be deployed internationally to ensure their teams consider the IEC/R process.</p> <p>Amend to - In 2005, the INSARAG network supported the establishment of independently verifiable, operational standards for international USAR Teams through the IEC/R process . INSARAG encourages all Member States with USAR Teams which are to be deployed internationally to consider following the IEC/R process.</p>
5.1	<p>Guidelines say - In a world in which disaster response is becoming more complex, INSARAG has provided a commendable standard-setting model for the rest of the humanitarian community.</p> <p>Remove the word commendable - subjective</p>
5.1	<p>Guidelines say - Affected countries will now be able to know the type of assistance they can expect to receive, and INSARAG Classified USAR Teams working alongside each other will be able to know the capacities each can offer. This endeavour promotes a common global USAR language and enhances the professional response, which meets the standards set in the INSARAG Guidelines.</p> <p>Amend wording to - Affected countries are now able to know the type of assistance they can expect to receive, and INSARAG Classified USAR Teams working alongside each other are able to know the capacities each can offer. This endeavour promotes a common global</p>



	USAR language and enhances the professional response, which meets the standards set in the INSARAG Guidelines.
5.2.1	<p>Guidelines say - A classified Light USAR Team is expected to have the operational capability to work only at one worksite for one work period (12 hours per day for five days).</p> <p>Worksite / Site? Ensure consistency of terminology</p>
5.2.2	<p>Guidelines say - A classified Medium USAR Team comprises the five components listed above and has the ability to conduct complex technical search and rescue operations in collapsed or failed structures of Heavy wood and/or reinforced masonry construction, including structures reinforced and/or built with structural steel.</p> <p>Replace capital H on heavy</p> <p>Worksite? Site? Ensure consistency of terminology</p>
5.2.3	<p>Guidelines say - A classified Heavy USAR Team is expected to have the equipment and manpower to work in a technical capacity at two work-sites simultaneously.</p> <p>Work-site? Worksite? Site? Ensure consistency of terminology</p>
5.3	<p>Guidelines say - Numerous Member States and member organisations have successfully undergone the IEC/R since it started in 2005, while many others have shown keen interest or are preparing their USAR Teams for upcoming IEC/Rs. This process has since facilitated capacity building and ensured minimum standards and matching capabilities to needs and priorities. Classified USAR Teams are well recognised by the INSARAG patch that they wear and have most recently proven to be a value-adding resource to earthquake affected countries.</p> <p>To this very day, it remains a truly unique process that establishes verifiable operational standards and an example of how independent peer review can provide a benefit in preparedness for response, and at the times of response. Both classifiers and the team undergoing IEC/R learn from one another, and this interaction is indeed highly valuable, because, in an earthquake, they will be the same people working closely together, to help save lives.</p> <p>Suggest amended wording</p> <p>Since 2005, numerous Member States and member organisations have successfully undergone the IEC/R, while many others have shown keen interest or are preparing their USAR Teams for upcoming IEC/Rs. This process has facilitated capacity building and ensured minimum standards and matching capabilities to needs and priorities. Classification is via peer review and classified USAR Teams are recognised by the INSARAG patch.</p>
5.3.2	<p>Guidelines say - From 2020, a separate IER checklist will be institutionalised to better access teams who must demonstrate a higher level of maturity and greater commitments and contributions to the network.</p>

	This is unclear and requires modification
5.3.3	Guidelines say - All costs associated with the planning, preparation and execution of the IEC/R exercise <b>is</b> the responsibility of the host country or the organisation requesting classification or reclassification.  All costs – <b>are</b> the responsibility
5.3.3	Guidelines say - The IEC/R requesting host country or the organisation however, determines and manages observers invited.  Amend wording to – The country or organisation requesting the IEC/R determines and manages invited observers.
Conclusion	Guidelines say - It is a living document, being improved with the lessons learned from major international USAR operations and/or exercises. It is also the reference document for capacity building at all levels.  Amend wording to - It is a living document, continuously improved with lessons learned from major international USAR operations and/or exercises. It is also the reference document for capacity building at all levels.
Conclusion	Guidelines say - The INSARAG Network has been consulted in the lead-up to the Global Meeting 2020 on the key strategic objectives. For the next five years, INSARAG will focus on reinforcing quality standards and coordination, advancing flexible assistance, enhancing preparedness and bolstering partnerships.  Will need amending
Annex A	Guidelines say - The responsibilities of INSARAG Focal Points can be described as ensuring <b>the</b> efficient information exchange and validation at the appropriate levels in the preparedness and response phases on USAR matters, including capacity building, trainings, policy matters, emergency alerts, requests or acceptance of assistance, mobilisation and provision of international assistance. The responsibilities can be categorised as follows:  Remove <b>the</b>
Annex A	Guidelines say - <b>Policy (national)</b> : Ensure the promotion of INSARAG Guidelines and methodology within the Member State and contribute to <b>the</b> continued policy development.  Remove <b>the</b>
Annex A	Guidelines say - There are also certain administrative responsibilities, such as serving as a point-of-contact between the <b>national government</b> and the INSARAG network, including the Secretariat, the Regional and the Steering Groups.  Does this mean member state, affected country?
Annex A	Guidelines say - Act as point-of-contact for all national USAR Teams – including NGO teams – on INSARAG matters, and be able to endorse the application of national USAR Teams for IECs.

	Add IERs
Annex A	<p>POLICY FOCAL POINT Ensure the promotion and implementation of INSARAG Guidelines and methodology as part of the national disaster management plan and for the national and international response of the Member State's USAR Teams as defined in UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance."</p> <p>Add the word <b>the</b> between implementation of and INSARAG – promotion of <b>the</b> INSARAG Guidelines</p> <p>Does INSARAG advocate for countries who are not at risk of earthquakes to still incorporate the Guidelines and Methodology? For example – the UK. Would UKISAR be advocating internally for UK USAR standards to be replaced by INSARAG ones? Is this point relevant to both sending and receiving teams?</p>
Annex A	<p>Guidelines say - Represent or ensure representation of <b>the</b> own Member State at meetings of the respective INSARAG Regional Group, and <b>if applicable</b> the ISG.</p> <p>Replace with - representation of <b>their</b> Member State</p> <p>National Policy Focal Point. Does not say that it is the Policy Focal Point that takes decisions at the ISG – this is crucial</p> <p>Remove <b>if applicable</b> – it is applicable – they are the Policy Focal Point and the only people mandated to make a decision at the ISG</p>
Annex A	<p>NATIONAL OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT Guidelines say - Act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for national USAR Teams within the Member State and promote the capacity building of <b>the</b> teams and <b>national</b> disaster management structure in line with INSARAG Guidelines and methodology, including <b>the</b> preparation for the establishment of RDC and OSOCC when required.</p> <p>Remove 2 x <b>the</b> and add a <b>the</b> in front of <b>national</b></p> <p>Does this mean promote capacity building within own country or in others' countries? Needs clarification.</p>
Annex A	<p>Guidelines say - When affected by an emergency of international significance within <b>the</b> own Member State, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide relevant information updates for the international operation <b>in</b> regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC.</p> <p>Replace the own with <b>their</b></p> <p>Replace <b>in</b> with <b>at</b></p> <p>Could say preferably on the VOSOCC but could be done in other ways? Email? Phone? WhatsApp? Identify which methods are being used and are accepted by ERS as formal correspondence.</p>

Annex A	<p>Guidelines say - When responding to an emergency in a third country, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide relevant information updates on the own Member State's planned or implemented response in regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC/OSOCC.</p> <p>Could say preferably on the VOSOCC but could be done in other ways? Email? Phone? WhatsApp? Identify which methods are being used and are accepted by ERS as formal correspondence.</p>
Annex A	<p>Guidelines say - Act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for <b>his</b> USAR Team. They are the contact to their national focal points (Policy and Operational), to the regional Chair as well to the INSARAG Secretariat.</p> <p>Replace with <b>their</b></p>
Annex A	<p>They are responsible <b>to promote and ensure</b> the INSARAG methodology and minimal standards in preparedness and response within <b>his</b> team.</p> <p><b>for promoting and ensuring their</b></p>
Annex A	<p>They are responsible <b>to update</b> the USAR directory of their teams.</p> <p><b>for updating</b></p>
Annex B	<p>INSARAG GLOBAL CHAIR – Guidelines say - Actively coordinate the activities of the Steering Group with the Secretariat, including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.</p> <p>Replace Steering Group with ISG</p>
Annex B	<p>INSARAG GLOBAL CHAIR – Guidelines say - Participate and represent the INSARAG global network in the annual meetings of <b>the</b> other INSARAG bodies (i.e. Regional Group Meetings, Team Leaders Meeting etc.) when available.</p> <p>Remove <b>the</b></p> <p>Add what happens if the Global Chair not available</p>
Annex B	<p>REGIONAL CHAIRS – Guidelines say - Host and co-organise the annual meeting of the Regional Group, with the support of the INSARAG Secretariat and the <b>Vice Chairs</b> (i.e. preparations for the two-day meeting, logistical arrangements, identifying meeting venue, if possible, covering the costs of accommodation to facilitate participation by all Member States and member organisations of the Regional Group).</p> <p>Hyphen in <b>Vice-Chairs</b>. Add <b>Regional</b> in front of <b>Vice-Chairs</b></p>
Annex B	<p>REGIONAL CHAIRS - Guidelines say - Participate and represent the region in the annual ISG Meeting, <b>in February in Geneva, Switzerland.</b></p>

	Remove wording in italics, the HNPW is no longer held in February and may change date and location
Annex B	REGIONAL VICE-CHAIR - Support the <b>Chair</b> in hosting and co-organising the annual meeting the Regional Group, with the support of the INSARAG Secretariat.  Add the word <b>Regional</b> in front of <b>Chair</b>
Annex B	REGIONAL VICE-CHAIR Guidelines say - Participate and represent the region in the annual ISG Meeting, <b>in February in Geneva, Switzerland.</b>  Remove wording in italics, the HNPW is no longer held in February and may change date and location
Annex B	REGIONAL VICE-CHAIR – Guidelines say - Actively coordinate the activities of the Regional Group with the Secretariat and the <b>Chair</b> , including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.  Add the word <b>Regional</b> in front of <b>Chair</b>
Annex B	REGIONAL VICE-CHAIR – Guideines say - If possible, participate and represent the region in the annual meetings of the other INSARAG Regional Groups.  Clarify whether this means if possible, or upon request?

## Annex E – Terms of Reference

### Policy Focal Point (PFP)

- Act as focal point on INSARAG policy matters of the government to the INSARAG network, including the Secretariat in OCHA, the respective Regional Group and Chair as well as the ISG and the Global Chair
- Act as point-of-contact for all national USAR Teams – including NGO teams – on INSARAG matters, and be able to endorse the application of national USAR Teams for IECs
- Ensure the promotion and implementation of INSARAG Guidelines and methodology as part of the national disaster management plan and for the national and international response of the Member State's USAR Teams as defined in UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 16 December 2002 on Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International USAR Assistance”
- Ensure that relevant information is communicated in a timely manner in times of emergencies to the INSARAG network through the INSARAG Secretariat and/or the relevant channels (i.e. the VOSOCC), including on request or acceptance of international assistance
- Represent or ensure representation of the own Member State at meetings of the respective INSARAG Regional Group, and if applicable the ISG
- Be able to take decisions or endorse items at INSARAG meetings where policy / financial impact decisions are required i.e. have spending authority directly or prior ministerial/high level approval of budgets, USAR strategy etc.
- Delegate decision making authority where necessary
- Reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines
- Liaise with the OFP on issues pertaining to USAR response and the INSARAG network
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network
- Hold at least one annual USAR event including both governmental and NGO teams to provide guidance on member state strategy, policy and financial commitment to USAR.

### Operational Focal Point (OFP)

- Act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for national USAR Teams within the Member State and promote the capacity building of the teams and national disaster management structure in line with INSARAG Guidelines and methodology, including the preparation for the establishment of RDC and OSOCC when required
- When affected by an emergency of international significance within the own Member State, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide relevant information updates for the international operation in regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC
- When responding to an emergency in a third country, act as counterpart to the INSARAG Secretariat/OCHA and provide relevant information updates on the own Member State's planned or implemented response in regular intervals to the INSARAG network on the VOSOCC/OSOCC
- Liaise with and advise PFP on USAR and INSARAG issues that have policy / financial impact

- Participate in and have oversight of the development of national and regional projects e.g. related to USAR national capacity building such as IRNAP.
- Reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines.
- Liaise with TFPs from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR response including changes to the standards, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives at least once annually.
- Liaise with and advise the PFP on USAR and INSARAG issues that have policy / financial impact.
- Participate in and have oversight of the development of national and regional projects e.g. related to USAR national capacity building such as IRNAP.
- Reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines.
- Liaise with TFPs from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR response including changes to the standards, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives at least once annually.
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network
- Hold at least one annual USAR event including both governmental and NGO teams to provide guidance on member state strategy, policy and financial commitment to USAR.

### Team Focal Point (TFP)

- Act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for their USAR Team. They are the contact to their national focal points (Policy and Operational), to the regional Chair as well to the INSARAG Secretariat.
- They are responsible for promoting and ensuring the INSARAG methodology and minimal standards in preparedness and response are upheld within their team.
- They are responsible for updating the USAR directory of their teams.
- Governmental TFPs to be accountable to their OFP, PFP and the INSARAG Secretariat for their team's compliance with the INSARAG Guidelines. NGO TFPs to ensure their teams comply with the INSARAG Guidelines
- Ensure any decisions undertaken are within the authority provided to them by their OFP / PFP (governmental teams) or supervisor / superior (NGO teams)
- Liaise with the OFP at least once annually on issues pertaining to USAR response including changes to standards, the INSARAG network and issues relating to member states' USAR/INSARAG policy objectives.
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network
- Attend at least one annual USAR event including both governmental and NGO teams to provide guidance on member state strategy, policy and financial commitment to USAR.

### Team Leader (TL)

- Act as point-of-contact on INSARAG operational matters for their USAR Team whilst deployed / exercising.
- Promoting and ensuring the INSARAG methodology and minimal standards in preparedness and response are upheld within their team.

- Ensure any decisions undertaken are within the authority provided to them by their OFP / PFP (governmental teams) or supervisor / superior (NGO teams)
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

### Regional Focal Point (RFP)

- To be completed by the INSARAG Secretariat

### INSARAG Unit Head

- To be completed by the INSARAG Secretariat

### Regional Chair

- Promote the INSARAG methodology and guidelines amongst Member States and member organisations of the region and promote their participation in the INSARAG Regional Group, including events like INSARAG regional earthquake response simulation exercises.
- Support the implementation of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration and the UN General Assembly resolution 57/150.
- Host and co-organise the annual meeting of the Regional Group, with the support of the INSARAG Secretariat and the Regional Vice Chairs (i.e. preparations for the two-day meeting, logistical arrangements, identifying meeting venue, if possible, covering the costs of accommodation to facilitate participation by all Member States and member organisations of the Regional Group).
- Organise or co-organise the regional earthquake simulation exercise (ERE)
- Represent the INSARAG network in the region in relevant meetings and events.
- Participate and represent the region in all required INSARAG events
- Actively coordinate the activities of the Regional Group with the Secretariat and the Regional Vice-Chairs, including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.
- If possible<sup>23</sup>, participate and represent the region in the annual meetings of the other INSARAG Regional Groups.
- Facilitate collaboration among national search and rescue teams and other key stakeholders within the region.
- Oversee the implementation of INSARAG's policies and guidelines within the region, ensuring compliance and quality of rescue operations.
- Provide regular reports on regional progress and challenges to the INSARAG Secretariat and contribute to the evaluation of the effectiveness of implemented
- Add additional items here that are agreed by the relevant Troika specific to their region
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

### Incoming Regional Chair

- Promote the INSARAG methodology and guidelines amongst Member States and member organisations of the region and promote their participation in the INSARAG Regional Group, including events like INSARAG regional earthquake response simulation exercises.

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<sup>23</sup> Clarification is needed as to whether this is if possible, or upon request.



- Support the implementation of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration and the UN General Assembly resolution 57/150.
- Support the Chair in hosting and co-organising the annual meeting the Regional Group, with the support of the INSARAG Secretariat.
- In discussion with the Regional Chair, represent the INSARAG network in the region in relevant meetings and events.
- Participate and represent the region in all required INSARAG events
- Actively coordinate the activities of the Regional Group with the Secretariat and the Chair, including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.
- If possible<sup>24</sup>, participate and represent the region in the annual meetings of the other INSARAG Regional Groups.
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network
- ***Discussion to be held by the Troikas, individually and together to agree additional items to be undertaken by all Incoming Regional Vice Chairs***
- ***Discussion to be held by each Troika to agree items to be undertaken by all Incoming Regional Vice Chairs, specific for their region.***

### Outgoing Regional Chair

- Promote the INSARAG methodology and guidelines amongst Member States and member organisations of the region and promote their participation in the INSARAG Regional Group, including events like INSARAG regional earthquake response simulation exercises.
- Support the implementation of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration and the UN General Assembly resolution 57/150.
- Support the Chair in hosting and co-organising the annual meeting the Regional Group, with the support of the INSARAG Secretariat.
- In discussion with the Regional Chair, represent the INSARAG network in the region in relevant meetings and events.
- Participate and represent the region in all required INSARAG events
- Actively coordinate the activities of the Regional Group with the Secretariat and the Chair, including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.
- If possible<sup>25</sup>, participate and represent the region in the annual meetings of the other INSARAG Regional Groups.
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network
- ***Discussion to be held by the Troikas, individually and together to agree additional items to be undertaken by all Outgoing Regional Vice Chairs***
- ***Discussion to be held by each Troika to agree items to be undertaken by all Outgoing Regional Vice Chairs, specific for their region.***

### Global Chair

- lead the promotion of the INSARAG methodology and guidelines globally amongst Member States and member organisations and promote participation in all INSARAG bodies.
- lead advocacy on the implementation of the INSARAG Hyogo Declaration and the UN General Assembly Resolution 57/150.
- Chair the annual meeting of the Steering Group.

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<sup>24</sup> Clarification is needed as to whether this is if possible, or upon request.

<sup>25</sup> Clarification is needed as to whether this is if possible, or upon request.

- actively coordinate the activities of the Steering Group with the Secretariat, including through regular teleconferences and other meetings.
- participate and represent the INSARAG global network in the annual meetings of the other INSARAG bodies (i.e. Regional Group Meetings, Team Leaders Meeting etc.) when available.
- represent the INSARAG network globally in relevant meetings, events and the media.
- ensure neutrality of decision-making within the INSARAG network
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

### Working Group Chair

- Ensuring the working group undertakes the activities set out within its terms of reference
- report to the Guidelines Coordination Working Group on progress
- provide an update on progress to regional committee meetings
- developing the terms of reference for working group vice-chairs
- attending the regional operational meeting within own region
- delegate authority to vice-chairs for attendance at regional operational meetings within their region
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

### Working Group Vice / Co Chair

- Supporting the working group chair to undertake the activities set out within its terms of reference
- support the working group chair to report to the Guidelines Coordination Working Group on progress
- support the working group chair to provide an update on progress to regional committee meetings
- attending the regional operational meeting within own region
- any other tasks as directed by the working group chair
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

### Regional Team Focal Point

The Regional Team Focal Point is (s)elected at the Team Leaders' meeting. They are responsible for representing their region at the Regional Operational Meetings and for reporting back to the Team Leaders; meeting

- Represent your region within Regional Committees
- Reporting back to the Team Leaders' Meeting
- Undertake an induction upon first joining the network

## Annex F – Proposed Terms of Reference for INSARAG Entities

### Global Steering Group (GSG)

The Global Steering Group is a closed open meeting, presided by the Global Chair, in which policy topics are being discussed amongst the following.

- 1 x Global Chair (no 'voting' rights except as adjudicator)
- 3 x Regional Chairs
- 3 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chairs
- 3 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chairs
- 1 x IFRC
- 1 x OCHA RSB (Sarah Muscroft)
- INSARAG Secretariat (no 'voting' rights)
- Independent Observer (for discussion)

The GSG Meeting takes place quarterly, with three meetings held online across regional time zones and one hybrid meeting held during the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW). Policy issues, areas of global concern or issues with a financial impact will have first been discussed within three Regional Committees and agreement reached at regional level prior to being raised at the GSG. Decisions made by consensus. If consensus not achieved, the Global Chair makes the decision.

### Regional Steering Group (RSG)

- 3 x Regional Chairs
- 3 x Incoming Vice Chairs
- 3 x Outgoing Vice Chairs

This group meets at least four times per year, three of which would be solely online and one hybrid meeting. This enables the Troikas to meet and discuss similarities and differences between the regions arising from the Regional Committees with the aim of reaching consensus in advance of the GSG. There is two-way communication, with Regional Chairs and Vice-Chairs taking ideas from the Regional Committees to the other representatives in this group and vice versa. The timing of the meetings needs to inform meetings of the GSG and to take views from the Regional Committees.

### Regional Committee (RC)

- 1 x Regional Chair
- 1 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chair
- 1 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chair
- Policy Focal Points from within the region
- Operational Focal Points from within the region (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x OCHA Regional Office Representative (no 'voting' rights)
- INSARAG Secretariat (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x Regional IFRC representative (no 'voting' rights)

Below the Regional Steering Group, there are three Regional Committees (RCs) which follow the existing AEME, Asia Pacific and Americas groupings which discuss regional policy issues, issues with financial impact and issues of global concern. There should be four meetings per year, three of which are online and in regional time zones, one of which is hybrid. A representative from relevant OCHA Regional Offices should attend to ensure alignment with regional OCHA policy objectives. Operational

decisions from the Regional Committees are discussed at Regional Steering Group level. Outputs from the Team Leaders' Meeting and working groups are discussed within the Regional Operational Meetings.

## Regional Operational Meeting (ROM)

Below the Regional Steering Group, there are five Regional Operational Meetings (ROMs) to reflect the split within the regions that is already taking place. They discuss operational issues and decisions made at these meetings are discussed at the three Regional Committee meetings. Where outputs from these meetings are issues of global concern or policy or financial impact, it is the responsibility of the Troika to discuss these within the Regional Committees. Each meeting comprises:

- 1 x Regional Chair
- 1 x Incoming Regional Vice-Chair
- 1 x Outgoing Regional Vice-Chair
- Operational Focal Points from within the region
- INSARAG Secretariat (no 'voting' rights)
- 1 x representative from Team Focal Points within the region (see below)
- 1 x representative (not necessarily the Chair) from the Guidelines Coordination Working Group from within the region (see below)

## Guidelines Coordination Working Group

This Replaces the Guidelines Review Group as a permanent working group to ensure inter-working group collaboration and coordination and monitoring progress of working groups against the Global Strategy. The position of chair of this working group should rotate around the regions

- Working Group Chair (region 1)
- Working Group Vice-Chair (region 2)
- Working Group Vice-Chair (region 3)

The GCWG:

- Defines the ToRs for other working groups
- Defines the ToRs for other working group chairs and vice-chairs
- Ensures that candidates for chair meet the minimum requirements established by the ToRs
- Monitors working group progress
- Ensures inter-working group collaboration and coordination
- Ensures working groups contribute to INSARAG's strategic objectives
- Ensures the INSARAG Guidelines are reviewed on a regular basis
- Attends the Regional Operational meetings
- Provides information to the Troika upon request
- Receives direction on operational tasks from the Regional Steering Group
- Receives direction on global issues from the Global Steering Group

## Team Leaders' Meeting

- The Team Leaders' meeting meets quarterly including three online in regional time zones and one hybrid meeting (rotating location). This meeting discusses operational issues which are passed to Regional Operational Meetings for consideration. At this meeting, participants (s)elect one representative (Regional Team Focal Point) per three (or five) regions to attend the Regional Operational

Meetings. This representative can be drawn from governmental, non-governmental, classified or non-classified teams.

## Generic Working Group

Working groups may be established, when needed, by request to the Guidelines Coordination Working Group, at the request of the Global Steering Group for issues of global, policy and financial concern and through the Regional Steering Group for operational issues. The Guidelines Coordination Working Group ensures that all working groups' objectives contribute to INSARAG's five-year strategy. The purpose of a Working Group is to develop solutions for specific technical issues. Each Working Group has terms of reference that reflects the scope and range of deliverables expected to be provided within a specific timeframe. Each Working Group has a chair, and two Vice-Chairs from the other regions and additional members, all nominated from each region to ensure a full, worldwide perspective on technical or operational issues raised by the USAR Team Leaders' Meeting and Regional Operational Meetings.

The working group chair is selected by the Guidelines Coordination Working Group based on terms of reference set by the GCWG. The chair develops terms of reference for the Vice-Chair and working group members. The INSARAG Secretariat will distribute the terms of reference to all INSARAG network members. Network members who wish to propose a candidate for inclusion within a working group needs to ensure that the candidate proposed meets the criteria set out by the terms of reference. The Secretariat facilitates the selection of these groups in consultation with the Guidelines Coordination Working Group, Regional and Global Chair, and assists in establishing the terms of reference, provides guidance and establishes timelines for work completion.

The Working Groups are encouraged to provide opportunities for qualified members to participate and engage in the process. The Working Group ceases when they complete their assigned tasks. At its annual meeting in Geneva, the Global Steering Group decides extensions of the Working Group beyond the given mandate.

## Annex G - Recommendations Table

Aspect	Recommendation
<b>Fit for Purpose</b>	
Localisation	<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> All teams within the INSARAG network should first achieve INSARAG Recognised Nationally Accredited (IRNAP) status before being permitted to join the IEC system. The Troika in each region should facilitate discussion on whether intra-regional deployments of IRNAP teams are acceptable for their region. If that is agreed, then teams who will only deploy within their own region will not require an IEC. Countries with teams mandated to deploy outside their region are strongly encouraged to undergo the IEC.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> The INSARAG Secretariat to map global USAR capacity to identify gaps and agree on priority countries with the INSARAG network. The network to advocate for support through either traditional donor funding via a capacity building programme / project or through an enhanced mentorship system between USAR teams.</p>
Complex Emergencies	<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> The INSARAG Secretariat to undertake a mapping of vulnerable countries and to work with donors and the INSARAG network to develop a capacity building programme targeting the most vulnerable countries. The mapping should identify USAR teams which could deploy to these locations. The network can also pre- identify which teams can and will deploy to these places in a major disaster.</p>
Climate Change	<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> Prior to developing the INSARAG strategy for 2025 – 2030, there should be discussion at a policy level on the position of INSARAG/USAR within the broader humanitarian context, its impact in relation to growing hydrometeorological emergencies and the localisation agenda.</p>
Values, Operational Norms and Humanitarian Principles	<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> Include the humanitarian principles and their definition in full within Volume 1 of the INSARAG Guidelines, to clarify the difference between the four fundamental humanitarian principles and the values, principles and operational norms developed by the INSARAG community with specific reference to INSARAG and USAR operations.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> INSARAG network organisations review the CHS against their own ways of working and their application within the INSARAG network as part of the new strategy.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 7:</b> The INSARAG network to consider how this GA Resolution applies to their work, for example, gender-responsive approaches, strengthening Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, supporting those with disabilities, either visible or invisible or those from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,</p>

Aspect	Recommendation
	Transgender, Queer, and Intersex (LGBTQIA+) communities, such as transgender people and to investigate the potential for training within these areas.
Geographic Diversity and Representation	<b>Recommendation 48:</b> The INSARAG Secretariat to facilitate a buddy system between existing and prospective members to foster INSARAG participation. The implementation of a quarterly induction process would facilitate greater inclusion, as well as undertaking more awareness raising initiatives. Awareness raising could be undertaken on a regional level, not country level and be a responsibility of the RFP, a troika member or both.
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	<b>Recommendation 49:</b> the INSARAG network to positively discriminate in favour of women or non-binary/transgender representation within INSARAG fora. Where possible member states and organisations to consider whether they are able to twin female or non-binary/transgender representatives alongside male counterparts.
	<b>Recommendation 50:</b> the INSARAG network to implement positive discrimination policies in favour of achieving a greater gender balance within USAR teams.
	<b>Recommendation 51:</b> Whilst this review was specifically tasked with reviewing issues of gender inclusion within the INSARAG network, the network should review inclusion of other under-represented people within INSARAG fora and USAR teams. Broader representation within the network would facilitate greater understanding of the people the network serves. This would also contribute to member states' obligations under GA Resolution 78/199.
<b>Recommendation 52:</b> See the proposal under <u>Network Structure Section</u> to provide a balance of face-to-face and online meetings and invest funds saved through not travelling as much to meetings in securing support for quality online meeting facilitation support (human/software). All tools to be checked for availability in each country.	Global Strategy 2025 - 2030
<b>Network Structure</b>	

Aspect	Recommendation
Leadership and Governance	<p><b>Recommendation 8:</b> Keep the Swiss as Global Chair and strengthen the role of Regional Chairs more to guide the INSARAG network. This could be achieved through better communication between the Global Chair and Regional Chairs, or the creation of a Vice-Chair position chosen from within the Regional Chairs. The current new year and mid-year calls are more of an information sharing forum and there needs to be a greater focus on driving change at regional level.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 9:</b> Meeting of PFPs in advance of the development of the new INSARAG strategy to discuss the network's positioning within the broader humanitarian system. Further information under the <u>Global Strategy Section</u> below.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 10:</b> Quarterly inductions by RFPs for new focal points – Policy, Operational, Team, WG Chairs / Vice Chairs, Regional Chairs / Vice Chairs. To include information on their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the network, expectations on participation and contribution etc.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 11:</b> After the initial endorsement by the PFP of participation of NGO teams within the INSARAG network, responsibility for decisions on attending meetings and courses or undertaking an IEC/IER should be defined by the Secretariat in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines and ensuring fair representation of all INSARAG members.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 12:</b> Add points below to the PFP Terms of Reference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that only PFPs can take decisions or endorse at INSARAG meetings where policy / financial impact decisions are required</li> <li>• that they can delegate decision making authority where necessary</li> <li>• PFPs need policy and / or financial decision-making authority, able to make decisions during meetings based on either their own direct authority or through prior ministerial/high level approval of budgets, USAR strategy etc</li> <li>• that they should reinforce compliance of national governmental teams with the INSARAG Guidelines</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Recommendation 13:</b> Change the gendered language within the ToR.</p>



Aspect	Recommendation
	<p><b>Recommendation 14:</b> In addition, for PFP, OFP and TFP, the ToR should include mandatory attendance at an induction session for new focal points, led by OCHA ERS RFPs overseeing their respective regions.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 15:</b> At least one annual meeting to be held between PFPs, OFPs and TFPs from both governmental and NGO teams on issues pertaining to USAR and the INSARAG network. This could include an induction session held back-to-back with regional meetings.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 16:</b> Draft Terms of Reference for both roles to provide clarity on what role they undertake and on whether they are compulsory or voluntary.</p>
	<p><b>Recommendation 17:</b> Prioritise recruitment of the vacant positions. OCHA to provide permanent additional staffing to ERS to manage the INSARAG network.</p>
Global Meeting	<p><b>Recommendation 18:</b> In light of the repeated concern from INSARAG stakeholders that resources are scarce, the network should consider discontinuing the Global Meeting and reassigning resources to activities identified within the INSARAG strategy of vital importance. Share information by email and undertake presentations as required in a virtual environment to facilitate inclusivity and reduce resource implications. Hold discussions on operational issues at the Team Leaders' Meeting, within working groups and within the newly created Regional Operational Meetings. See the <u>Network Structure Section</u> also.</p>
The INSARAG Steering Group (ISG)	<p><b>Recommendation 19:</b> ToRs developed for the (Incoming) Regional Vice Chair, (Outgoing) Regional Vice Chair and Chair that clearly define and assign roles and responsibilities to underpin their work during their tenure.</p>

Aspect	Recommendation
	<b>Recommendation 20:</b> The Secretariat to plan the Troika five years in advance and maintain this on a rolling basis.
	<b>Recommendation 21:</b> Develop a ToR for the role of RFP, clearly detailing the activities that they are able to undertake in support of the Troika.
Regional meetings	<b>Recommendation 22:</b> Separate policy and operational through the creation of Regional Committees to discuss policy issues. Regional Committee meetings should be hybrid to facilitate inclusivity and real-time translation provided where required. Decisions from the Regional Committees to be submitted to the Regional Steering Group for discussion and decision. See <u>Network Structure Section</u> for more details.
	<b>Recommendation 23:</b> Separate policy from operational through the creation of Regional Operational Meetings. Regional Operational meetings to be hybrid to facilitate inclusivity and real-time translation provided where required. Decisions from the Regional Operational Meetings to be submitted to the Regional Committee for discussion and decision. See <u>Network Structure Section</u> for more details.
	<b>Recommendation 24:</b> Create a Regional Steering Group comprising the Regional Vice Chairs and Chairs from each region. The Regional Steering Group to hold at least four meetings per year, three of which are online, to discuss policy issues. from the Regional Steering Group are discussed at a newly created Global Steering Group. See <u>Network Structure Section</u> for more details.
Relationship with OCHA HQ and Regional Offices	<b>Recommendation 25:</b> No formal split of the regions to take place in order to foster information sharing, regional cooperation and solidarity.
	<b>Recommendation 26:</b> Add an additional RFP to the Secretariat. Take into consideration broader ERS staffing needs vis-à-vis the scope of managing the INSARAG network compared to the EMT Initiative as recommended previously. This should include consideration of extra staffing should there be a substantial shift towards response to hydrometeorological events as recommended in this study.
	<b>Recommendation 27:</b> If OCHA is unable to increase staffing within the Secretariat, then regions to consider staffing this role themselves. Whilst they would operate outside of the UN system, they could undertake the same activities as OCHA RFPs in support of their region. See <u>Network Structure Section</u> for more details.
	<b>Recommendation 28:</b> Amend the ToRs for PFPs and OFPs to include the need for improved communications around strategy / policy objectives and financial commitment to USAR. Ensure

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Team Leaders' Meeting	inclusion of this responsibility within the Focal Point inductions recommended elsewhere in this review.
	<b>Recommendation 29:</b> Amend the ToRs for OFPs and TFPs to include the need to inform TFPs on member states' policy / strategic objectives and financial commitment to USAR. Ensure inclusion of this responsibility within the Focal Point inductions recommended elsewhere in this review.
	<b>Recommendation 30:</b> All Team Leaders meetings to be held in a hybrid environment and investment made in good online meeting facilitation. This could include real-time translation and transcription software. The Secretariat to ensure in advance of any events whether the proposed tools work in every country. Consider four meetings per year, with three online and one face-to-face.
	<b>Recommendation 31:</b> The topics that would normally be presented in the Global Meeting are addressed at the Team Leaders meeting and the Global Meeting discontinued.
	<b>Recommendation 32:</b> Consider holding face to face training for TFPs, Classifiers and Mentors back-to-back with Team Leader meetings.
	<b>Recommendation 33:</b> Multi-language, online training for Team Leaders, Classifiers and Mentors to be developed to increase inclusivity and efficiency. This should be downloadable so as to operate in low-bandwidth contexts.
	<b>Recommendation 34:</b> The network to consider which training in general could be converted into online training to increase accessibility and to reduce travel.
Working Groups	<b>Recommendation 35:</b> Organisations proposing working group members to ensure that the candidate they propose has the skillsets identified by the working group Chair.
	<b>Recommendation 36:</b> Organisations proposing candidates to be part of a working group need to ensure that the role is enshrined in their job description as an appropriate percentage of their day-to-day activities e.g. 5%, 10% etc. <b>Recommendation 37:</b> Creation of an observer status within working groups. This would facilitate learning and understanding across regions.
	<b>Recommendation 38:</b> the Secretariat should enforce the INSARAG Guidelines on tenure of working group Co-Chairs, ensuring balanced representation.
	<b>Recommendation 39:</b> The number of working groups should be reduced to the same amount or fewer than the amount of RFPs within the Secretariat so that RFPs can support each working group effectively. Topics should be amalgamated as appropriate, for example through the reinstatement of the Operations Working

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	Group which would be a catch all on technical issues. The Secretariat should ensure that new working groups contribute to the medium and long-term outcomes identified within the strategy. See <u>Global Strategy Section</u> below for further details.
NGOs and Partners	<b>Recommendation 40:</b> The letter of endorsement by PFPs to an NGO's participation in the INSARAG network to be reframed as a letter of acknowledgement of their involvement within the network. The separation of governmental and non-governmental is key. Governmental entities do not have authority over NGO teams and should not endorse whether NGO teams have the skills to participate in the INSARAG network.
	<b>Recommendation 41:</b> All further correspondence to be direct with NGO Teams and not go through national focal points to ensure equal opportunities to attend meetings and courses.
	<b>Recommendation 42:</b> NGO Team Leaders / Focal Points are eligible to represent their region within the newly created Regional Operational Meetings. See <u>Network Structure Section</u> for further details.
<b>Decision Making, Accountability and Compliance</b>	
Accountability and Compliance	<b>Recommendation 43:</b> The INSARAG network to discuss whether they are INSARAG Standards or INSARAG Guidelines. This could include discussion around whether there are non-negotiables within the INSARAG Guidelines that all teams need to meet whilst deployed or during preparedness initiatives, should the decision be to keep them as guidelines, not standards.
	<b>Recommendation 44:</b> Include an internal investigations framework within the INSARAG Guidelines. The Secretariat could raise the issue with PFPs from member states and TFPs from NGOs, but any investigation process would be undertaken internally. Following internal investigations, PFPs and TFPs to provide assurances to the INSARAG Secretariat that the issue has been investigated in accordance with the INSARAG Guidelines.
	<b>Recommendation 45:</b> Discuss whether the network wants to apply 'soft' or 'hard' penalties within the system. Hard penalties could include being stripped of IEC/IER status; soft compliance would be continual reinforcement of the need to comply with INSARAG Guidelines.
Decision-Making Mandate and Responsibilities	<b>Recommendation 46:</b> Agree the definition of consensus given within this report. Consensus is endorsed when nobody eligible to vote objects. No threshold should be set, and consensus does not mean 100%. Continue with consensus as the way to make decisions. Ensure that all meetings where decisions of a policy nature are undertaken are hybrid to ensure full participation of those who are permitted to make decisions or accept proxy votes

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	<p data-bbox="467 253 1391 432">in advance. On the rare occasion that consensus cannot be reached, the Global Chair to make the decision, in consultation with the three regional chairs and INSARAG Secretary, on behalf of the INSARAG network following the principles outlined within the INSARAG Guidelines.</p> <p data-bbox="467 454 1391 712"><b>Recommendation 47:</b> Amend the wording within section 2.6 to place the focus on building domestic/national capacity first, then the potential for having a NAP, then an IRNAP. Clarify whether intraregional agreements where a NAP or IRNAP is sufficient could be established. This may alleviate some of the pressure on the IEC system where teams only intend to deploy within their region.</p>