

Light Teams Working Group Summary

Asia Pacific Regional Meeting

Xi'an, China. 25-26 August 2016

The Light Teams Working Group work to date was presented to the participants on 25 August 2016, commencing with the review of the Nepal Earthquake response by classified and non-classified teams. The background and terms of reference were presented, being a recommendation of the INSARAG Steering Group Meeting of 2016, that identified that there should be a greater recognition of Light Teams. The presentation was provided as 'a work in progress' with no final decision being made on Light Teams (international) at this point.

The terms of reference covered:

Capability and Tasks – Provide a higher capacity than National Light Teams. [The capabilities and tasks as listed in the attached document were discussed to ensure understanding].

Organisation of a Light Team – 17 people as a base line, or 17-20 as needed. [The team make up as listed in the attached document were discussed to ensure understanding].

Quality Assurance – four options provided (from IEC to self-assessment). [The four quality assurance options as listed in the attached document were discussed to ensure understanding].

INSARAG Identification of a Light Team (the badge)

The advantages of Light Teams in International deployments were discussed, and this drew comment from several of the attendees, particularly in the area of Value Adding to a response. There was strong support for the concept of developing specialist light teams (canine teams, RDC Teams, Medical Teams etc) to supplement existing heavy and medium teams. There was also a strong feeling from several regional representatives that there may not be a significant gain from implementing a 'classification' of Light Teams for International deployments, even though there were 15 non-IEC teams that deployed to Nepal in "light" configuration (between 12 and 25 People). Discussion also identified that the validation of a responding "team" should be moderated by INSARAG, with ultra-small teams (2 – 10 people for example) not being recognised as a responding 'USAR team' for earthquake response unless they are a specialised team (UCC, RDC, OSOCC, WASH etc). This will remove the recognition of an ultra-small team (eg, 2 people) as a response USAR team.

The proposed size of a light team (17-20 people) was discussed and appeared to be accepted as it aligns with the INSARAG National Light make up (18 people).

The quality assurance options were discussed, with some concern about the funding arrangements for Light Teams, if they are to be 'classified' by current Medium or Heavy

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teams. The funding model will be a significant decision point in the decision to implement the Light Team (International) format.

Team identification was also discussed and gained comment from various participants.

A questionnaire was provided to each participant to collect their thoughts, with Zhao (China) collecting the completed questionnaires to collate the views of the participants and provide the results to the LTWG.

Areas that will need to be investigated further:

1. Funding arrangements for classification of Light Teams (international). Dependent upon the QA requirements for Light Teams, there may be a financial impost on Medium and Heavy teams if classifiers are needed to classify Light Teams, with no reciprocal agreements in place.
2. Is there greater benefit in building National capacity to receive teams, than to classify Light Teams to respond internationally?
3. Is there greater benefit in capacity building to use specialist teams to value add (Medical, RDC, OSOCC, Canine, WASH etc) by attaching them to existing Medium / Heavy teams, or having them work alone in their speciality in a coordinated response.

The perspective of specialist teams, as opposed to Light USAR Teams, is outside the scope of works for the Light Teams Working Group, however there was strong support for the development of the specialist team concept as an INSARAG capacity.

More work and research will be needed to guide the way for future discussions.

The questionnaire was provided to all participants to gain their perspectives for the LTWG concept. Zhao has collected the hard copies and will compile them into an excel spreadsheet to be forwarded to Arjan as the LTWG chair. Zhao has also offered to scan the original questionnaires and send them to Arjan also, as a point of reference.