

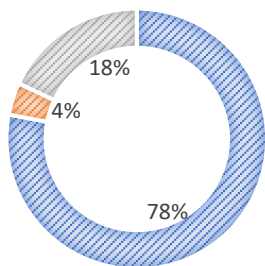
The INSARAG Secretariat conducted a Gender Analysis of the networks 58 classified teams in January and February 2025. This initial survey serves as a baseline for the INSARAG Secretariat to explore ways to enhance gender inclusion within the network, address existing disparities, and develop strategies to promote equitable participation in USAR operations. Please see baseline findings below.

## Findings

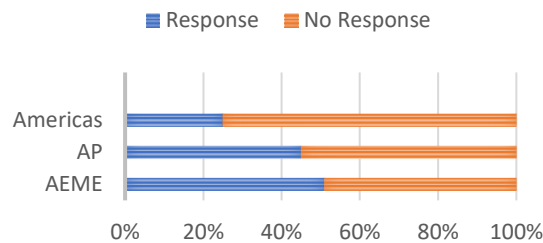
48% of Classified Teams responded to the Gender Analysis Survey

### RESPONSES

■ AEME ■ Americas ■ AP



### RESPONSES RELATIVE TO NUMBER OF TEAMS PER REGION



50%

Responding teams that provide menstrual products in their deployment kits



10%

Average percent of women on INSARAG Classified teams

Results indicate that women are more present in management, medical and K9 search than other positions

#### In 2024:

- \*All Regional Meetings discussed Gender in USAR
- \*The ISG brought up a lack of gender representation in classifiers.
- \*"Gender Perspective in Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Operations" dialogue had almost 90 participants, and was held in Spanish, organized by INSARAG & Organization of American Firefighters (OBA)

#### Survey Responses Indicated a Positive Perspective on Gender Inclusion:

- \*Better representation of society
- \*Better communication
- \*Fewer Conflicts
- \*Cultural advantages in some deployment contexts where some women may prefer USAR personnel of the same gender

#### Survey Responses Indicated a Desire for the Network to:

- \*Share Best Practices, Create Mentorship Opportunities, Support Work-Life Balance

#### Survey Responses Indicated Perceived Barriers to Women's Participation in USAR:

- \*Physical Demands, Cultural and Societal Factors, and Limited Female Representation in Fire Services that feed into USAR teams

## Expanded Survey Results

### Policy and Documentation

Responses indicate that significant variation exists in whether teams have formal gender policies. Many teams reported having no specific gender references in their documents, while others adhere to national legislation or broader organizational policies.

### Team Discussions and Awareness

Some teams report never discussing gender inclusion, while others have had extensive conversations on the topic. Responses indicated two approaches to Gender in USAR:

- "Gender-neutral" teams emphasize treating everyone equally, without special consideration for gender.
- Other teams indicated that they actively work to identify and remove barriers to women's participation.

### Inclusion

52% of teams that responded indicated that they include menstrual hygiene products in their deployment kits.

Several teams have implemented separate sleeping, toilet, and shower facilities for female team members. Some teams have adapted uniforms with different cuts and sizes.

One team in AEME specified switching to a "bag-system" toilet for improved hygiene and privacy.

### Perceived Barriers to Women's Participation in USAR

The most commonly cited barrier submitted by teams was the physical nature of USAR work, as well as deployment conditions that may be uncomfortable and lack private hygiene facilities.

Family responsibilities, including challenges balancing USAR participation with childcare and family obligations was also echoed by teams.

Several teams pointed to gender stereotypes and societal expectations limiting women's involvement, also relating to limited female representation in fire services, which serve as a key recruitment pool for USAR teams.

### Positive Perspectives on Gender Inclusion

Teams responded that gender inclusion in USAR better represented society, led to more diverse teams with improved communication and fewer conflicts.

Responses also indicated that there are cultural advantages in deployment contexts where women may prefer same-gender responders, as well as medical personnel of different genders providing appropriate care.

### Recommendations Based on Survey Responses

Several actionable recommendations were submitted to the INSARAG Secretariat including requests to:

- Facilitate knowledge exchange between teams that have successfully implemented accommodations and those still developing them.
- Create mentorship opportunities for women in the INSARAG network.
- Showcase successful female USAR professionals as role models.

The results indicate that the network is interested in the creation of an informal women's network within INSARAG. This mechanism would allow women to connect, providing a space for dialogue, mentorship, and knowledge exchange. The Secretariat can provide support through facilitating meeting spaces and will look to creating a private Facebook group.

*It is recommended that this be distributed at the 2025 ISG, members interested in spearheading the informal network contact the Secretariat, and the survey be repeated annually.*