

INTRODUCTION

At its annual meeting on 7 May 2024, the INSARAG Steering Group (ISG) discussed the completed INSARAG Governance Review Report. Subsequently, the INSARAG Secretariat grouped the 52 recommendations together into three Annexes, of which Annex 1 covers 8 thematic areas with 20 recommendations. The Regional Groups have discussed Annex 1 in 2024, with the aim of developing a regional position on these areas, to be consolidated and converted into a recommended Global Position for preliminary discussion during the New Year Teleconference (NYT) in January 2025.

During the NYT, disagreements were voiced regarding the draft findings for the Global Position. The differing views of the Americas Co-Chair and the Russian Policy Focal Point primarily related to the findings on 'Decision-Making Mandate and Responsibilities' (thematic area 2) and 'Localization' (thematic area 7), stating that no agreement had been reached on these topics in their respective regions.

On 25 March 2025, the INSARAG Steering Group endorsed the initial outcome of the INSARAG Governance Review, Annex 1. Upon reflection with the Regional Chairs, three Thematic Areas will be further discussed and presented for endorsement at the ISG 2026.

Below are suggested options from the Secretariat on how to move forward with **Thematic Area 2: Decision-Making Mandate; Thematic Area 3: Accountability and Compliance; and Thematic Area 7: Localization**.

THEMATIC AREA 2: DECISION-MAKING MANDATE

INITIAL QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK RECIVED FROM THE REGIONS

Questions	AEME	AP	Americas	Global
2. Decision-Making Mandate and Responsibilities				
2.1 Consensus is when nobody eligible to vote objects.	Yes	50-50	Yes	
2.2 If consensus cannot be reached, defer to Global Chair, Regional Chairs and Secretary?	Yes	Yes	No	

The initial Governance review report provides on page 42 that '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.' It would appear that the initial questions have been amended during the consultation process, which has led to differing views and results within the network.

REVISED QUESTIONS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

In view of the differing views, the following amended questions are recommended in going forward:

2.1 Consensus is reached when all members have agreed to adopt a proposal. Members can agree to adopt a proposal, but still have reservations.
2.2 If consensus cannot be reached, the issue will be deferred to the Global Chair and the Regional Chairs

Explanatory note regarding question 2.1:

Consensus is reached when all Member/Policy Focal Points have agreed to adopt a proposal. However, reaching consensus is not the same thing as being unanimous. It is important to note that consensus does not mean that all

Members agree on every word or paragraph of the text of the proposal. Members can agree to adopt a proposal, but still have reservations.

When Members have reservations about elements of a draft proposal that they have agreed to adopt by consensus, those who are not sponsors of the proposal have the opportunity to explain their position.

Explanatory note regarding question 2.2:

On the rare occasion that consensus cannot be reached, the team/member state with a differing view may take it to their regional chair, who may speak to the other regional chairs, the Global Chair and the PFP involved, facilitated by the Secretariat to result in a pragmatic decision.

THEMATIC AREA 3: ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

INITIAL QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK RECIVED FROM THE REGIONS

Questions	AEME	AP	Americas	Global
3. Accountability and Compliance				
3.1 Should the INSARAG Guidelines be recognized as standards rather than merely guidelines?	Guidelines	Standards	Standards	
3.2 Should INSARAG have an internal investigations framework within the INSARAG Guidelines?	No	Yes	Yes	
3.3 If yes, should PFPs and TFPs provide internal investigation assurances to the INSARAG Secretariat?	No	Yes	Yes	

The INSARAG Guidelines are silent on ramifications for non-compliance, including who or which organization within the network is empowered to ensure compliance. The status of the non-legally binding INSARAG Guidelines cannot be unilaterally changed by its members under international law. As such, and in view of the fact that a univocal global position has not been achieved, the Secretariat suggests excluding this area from the Governance Review.

THEMATIC AREA 7: LOCALIZATION

INITIAL QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK RECIVED FROM THE REGIONS

Questions	AEME	AP	Americas	Global
7. Localization				
7.1 Should Regional Groups map global USAR capacity to identify gaps and agree on priority countries in the network?	Yes	Yes	No	
7.2 Should Regional Groups map vulnerable countries to work with donors & the INSARAG network to develop a capacity-building programme for countries requesting external support?	Yes	Yes	No	

The Americas Region concluded that announcing priority or vulnerable countries could have domestic political implications. Since gaps are already being identified and addressed bilaterally with appropriate assistance, there is no need for regional groups to map vulnerable countries according to the Americas Region. As a result, and in the absence of a univocal global position, the Secretariat suggests applying a regional approach to this area, which is in line with the current practice within the network. Consequently, this area is recommended to be excluded from the Governance review.

RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD

- Continue the consultative process and discuss Thematic Area 2 during upcoming Regional Meetings and provide an update on the recommended next steps regarding Thematic Areas 3 and 7.
- Conduct a teleconference after the Regional meetings - before the new year - to ensure clarity and agreement on this critical area.
- Seek endorsement of all outstanding areas of the Governance Review at the 2026 ISG.