



INSARAG Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting

26 – 27 September 2023
Christchurch, New Zealand

Chairperson's Summary



Annex D – Outcomes of the breakout discussions

Session 4:

Breakout Discussion on Regional Implementation of EQ Lessons Learned/Way Forward

Purpose of this session:

Reflect lessons learned from the Turkiye/ Syria response to AP region:

"What if" a similar scale of earthquake occurs in the region?

- Is the regional group ready to respond?
- What would be the challenges that USAR teams/LEMAs may face in AP?
 - How can we further strengthen our preparedness and response?

1. Mobilisation / team preparedness / decision making on deployment and demobilisation.

Facilitator: Mohd Khairul Jamil, Malaysia. Note taker: Aaron Waterreus, New Zealand

Mobilisation

- Need for early collaboration between Govt/Agencies/Response assets when event occurs and there is likelihood of deployment.
- Need for understanding of appropriate response mechanisms across decision-making bodies.
- Different response mechanisms Bilateral/ASEAN etc can be beneficial but can also add complexity
- Flexible and modular approach required to match the need with the appropriate response assets
 - specialist coordination or assessment function.

Preparedness

- Database of countries would be useful – cultural requirements, can dogs come? Facts and figures, National Response Framework etc
- Build relationships before the event – train together before the event - don't just turn up after the event
- Agreements in place with carriers before the need to fly. Often military assets aren't available or take time to stand up. Commercial options often too busy to fly.
- Education piece for diplomats and decision-makers required as ongoing piece of work
- NAP and IRNAPS should have a component that allows them to fully understand and integrate with the mechanisms and frameworks in place

Response

- Important to remember that we are responding to assist the host country. RDC/SCC/UCC may not be called the same but may be stood up, and just require support.
- Information is key – standard use of collector tools required, and align the VO and ICMS
- Have a good comms plan set up so while on deployment you can front foot issues (such as aftershocks) and let the focal points/families at home know you're ok

Logistics

- Inconsistencies during equipment/uniform during deployment sees one agency changing approach to issuing as they go out the door
- Being mindful of the environment/temperature/weather of where you are going and take appropriate equipment/uniform
- What can be done before deployment by host countries to be aware of the high demand on transportation resources when aid/teams arrive

Demobilisation

- More thought from teams required on demobilisation planning – changes to your cache/gifting/cleaning/repatriation/arrival in country

2. Field Coordination / RDC / UCC / LEMA.

Facilitator: Shinya Iwata, Japan. Note taker: Jeff Maunder, New Zealand

Key WGs takeaways and lessons from the Türkiye -Syria Earthquakes response from the Team Leaders Meeting

- **USAR Coordination:** The relation and cooperation between USAR and UNDAC operations during a mission are crucial, must be clarified, and strengthened.
- **IEC/R compliance:** The importance of RDC/UCC/SCC operations must be enforced in the IEC/IER process.
- **Information management:** ICMS is changing coordination, and we must review the collected data to see how we can further improve efficiency and effectiveness for operations.
- **Localization:** Provide enhanced guidance to member states on incorporating USAR coordination principles into national disaster preparedness and response plans, including USAR assessment.
- **USAR operations:** The design of a new App/Form that allows teams to quickly submit relevant information would be beneficial to speed up information sharing and coordination of the operations.

Reflections of lessons learned from the Türkiye /Syria response to AP region:

- Coordination slow to develop
- Coordination saves lives
- Faster implementation of coordination structures
- Cities and LEMA working differently - Teams needed to understand what the need was for a specific location
- Loss of EMA capacity and infrastructure
- Poor situational awareness
- Impact was outside our methodologies and systems. Adjustments around more enabling and less prescriptive to enable out of scope events to be managed within our methodology and systems.
- Developing cooperative and collaborative approaches to preparation and developing common methodology and systems during peace time
- Strengthens our technical agencies
- Building partnerships
- Teams not contributing to UCC
- Specialist UCC Teams with an employable capability
- Partner agencies RDC capabilities
- IEC/R compliance.
- UNDAC needs a better understanding of INSARG methodology - amalgamation of INSARAG and UNDAC in a cooperative space

- Development of ICMS and associated systems
- How to we absorb and utilise data
- Development of IRNAP and NAP
- Development of modern and fast data collection tools. (Blitz rescue)
- Non-Classified teams - not used by non-classified teams
- INSARAG marking systems
- Use of Quick capture and track logs

Field Coordination/RDC/UCC/LEMA

- Strengthening links with LEMA in countries where UNDAC is not present
- RDC/UCC Teams competency and compliance around UC not evident
- UCC a specialist function
- Training and introduction of UCC (Concepts) into Pacific (local areas of influence)

Online Participants: Fiji, Pakistan, and Solomon Islands

Facilitator: Haruka Ezaki, OCHA. Note taker: Pornpilin Smithveja, OCHA

1. Mobilisation / team preparedness / decision making on deployment and demobilisation.

Preparedness

- IRNAP (Accreditation for NERT to trained on INSARAG methodologies) or a
- Pacific TWG on IRNAP
- Capacity-Development Framework for the NERT
- Shared resources for the AP region – expertise to train on technical and
- Equipment

2. Field Coordination / RDC / UCC / LEMA.

- Field coordination
- Strengthen the coordination between USAR and UNDAC as interoperability and
- train UNDAC to UCC coordination between UNDAC and teams/UCC/ RDC

Session 5: Breakout Discussion on Regional Implementation of ISG Outcomes

This was a breakout session split into 4 rotating groups, led by WG Co-Chairs or Reps

Purpose of the discussion

- To review the ISG 9 outcomes and provide guidance on the designated WG group
- To use the discussion key areas to discuss, comment and collect the recommendations and feedback from participants in each group

Discussion Topics

1. Decision Making Process-GRG
2. Flood Response-FRWG
3. Localisation-NCBWG
4. Revised IER

1. Decision Making Process – GRG

Facilitator: John Cawcutt, Australia. Note Taker: Phil Grace, New Zealand

Governance

- Current INSARAG governance arrangements are working quite well – Consideration be given to some fine tuning but be aware of unintended consequences
- Governance process needs to be relevant, recognise the importance of stability and transparency.
- Roles and responsibilities of all positions (Position Description) should be provided
 - Example Regional Chair functions
- The Working Groups could be clarified including how they work across issues.
- Structure of policies and guidelines and associated documents can be difficult to navigate – it can be a challenge to locate some information.
 - Consider contemporary electronic cloud-based guidelines approach – with the ability to submit suggestions.
- Lessons learned – Need a stronger process to implement corrective actions / change.
 - A lesson is not learned until it is implemented.
 - Difficult to influence change – How are AAR considered and acted upon. These should be fed back into the WG
- Better explanation of INSARAG capability aimed at external audience / stakeholder
 - Example - One pager external summary of: light, medium, heavy capability.

Regional Chair

- Better long-term planning – Regional events including Chair should be 2-3 years in advance.
- Need to be clear about the roles and responsibilities.
 - Consider if the Chair has two-year term to deliver ISG & Regional outcomes.
- Provide terms of reference / job description for Chair, clear criteria of roles, responsibilities, functions etc and assessment.
 - Develop clearer process map for Chair - avoid being too prescriptive - consider broader terms of reference.
 - Example - AP may not need to have the same approach as AEME so long as it's within the framework.

Selection Process:

- Needs to be fair and transparent
- Needs longer term outlook
- Linked to a nomination process (Application) – not too onerous

Options

- Forward Nomination – Country nominates for a year up to 5 years in advance. (First in first served). Slots available on Regional Page
- Selection be based on application – Troika decides if conflict – consider capabilities, vision.
- Time since last Chairmanship? / Rotation - teams undertake chair 2 years before/after an IER.
- Can the role be a cooperative role shared between countries? - Representative groups (Pacific Islands) - Pathways to becoming eligible for chair – observing, mentorship

2. Flood Response – FRWG

Facilitator: Jeremy Stubbs, Australia. Note taker: Rob McDowall, New Zealand

Regional Roster of Flood Response Teams and capacities

- Needs to be common terminology (eg; awareness, in water, on water, over water?)
- Defined levels of operation
- Common equipment standards and inventories
- Accepted skill levels - Transferability/recognition of skills between countries
- Capability and capacity building – Supplementing and/or enhancing existing capability?
- Modular approach for different geographical demands – Asian continent, Pacific Islands
- Funding offshore deployments could be problematic unless there is immediate humanitarian need

Guidance for the FRWG

- Common operating guidelines – guidance more than prescriptive doctrine
- Shared structures and Terms of reference (TOR)
- Utilise opportunities for shared learning and experiences
- Guidance on deploying capability to the best location in time to be most effective – Pre-positioning of resources to forecast weather events
- Feeling from Pacific Islands of not being kept updated on INSARAG matters

3. Localization – NCBWG

Facilitator: Wahyudi L. Putra, Indonesia. Note taker: Joseph Kaleda, USA

- Should the AP IRNAP Working Group continue in the AP Region under the NCBWG to assist the AP Region with Capacity Building, NAP and IRNAP?
 - Consensus is yes, and to look at maybe changing out with some different members.
 - Opportunity to for the Pacific Island nations to participate
- Is there anything that the AP Region sees the need to add to the TOR for the NCBWG?
 - Consensus is that they do not see any at this early stage
 - The NCBWG needs to continue to message and simplify the difference between the NAP and IRNAP process
 - How to accommodate participation for including the pacific islands experience and getting the information from the NCBWG
 - More follow up that the inputs from the AP countries sent to the NCBWG is acknowledged that it was received.

4. Revised IER – TWG/IEC/R Review WG

Facilitator: Dewey Perks, USA. Note taker: Mohd Khairul Bin Jamil, Malaysia

Supporting IER Processes & Sustainability of Systems

- Supporting respective region – advantages familiar Faces, languages, near to neighbouring country
- Modular Approach – separation on Management vs Practical USAR for IER
- Increase the Classifier number to cope with the demand of IER

- Rescheduling the IER to balance the IER processes for all country
- Data on the demand of IER and supplying the classifier to meet the demand.
- Building Capacity to support IER must be a lot of Newcomer
- Issue of cost and time taken
- Given Free pass on the COVID 19 IER and Country that deploys in Turkiye
- UNDAC vs USAR requirement supposed to be understandable on the capacity systems
- Must have a planning and reporting on Progress Classified Component From years 1 – 5 to be mature with the IER systems to waived IER (Compulsory)
- Involve more in Govt in cooperation with IER programs
- Should change classification systems by extension of classification periods.
- Grace periods for IER during Covid 19 (plus 2 years) add more time.
- Must have a data of multi disciplines of multi-classifier by Countries
- Regional Classifier to helps the Region for IER Processes
- Developing the classifier by regional
- Minimize USAR reclassification by less field exercise segment by mentoring and focal point of the team self-auditing
- Checking capability by mentor and team knowledge sharing will be part of IER
- Bring new working group for IEC/IER
- Peer reviews group on deployment on-going training and focusing on the components of IER
- Annual exercise with a report to Secretariat
- Mentor to give feedback on pre green guidelines.
- Team Leaders process on IER early notification less.
- IER Mentor Team to help improves reclassification
- Maintain capability by maintaining POE to INSARAG
- Redefine TOR for Mentor Team Capabilities to helps IER team.
- Assurance on Quality of Mentoring by INSARAG working group
- Mentor to do Quality Assurance once a year upon annual exercise to ensure standards
- Approach on IER team based on year 3 to know the short fall and years 5 to do full Exercise with Mentor Team
- IER Mentor need to establish report to the agency for corrective measure on IER Team
- Major Exercise is a great tool to measure and analysing intelligence the component in IER team to improve the capacity.

Online Participants: Fiji, Pakistan, and Solomon Islands

Facilitator: Haruka Ezaki, OCHA. Note taker: Pornpilin Smithveja, OCHA

1. Decision Making Process – GRG

- Add flood response topic to regional and ISG agenda since the WGs are now established
- Suggested to create regional/sub-regional group or WG to contextualize INSARAG to the region. While Asia has strong capacity, the Pacific needs more training and understanding in INSARAG.
- Pacific countries suggested to create in-country INSARAG WG to integrate INSARAG to national response
- coordination framework and allow the national FPs to provide comprehensive feedback to the INSARAG system

2. Flood Response – FRWG

- Add flood response to IRNAP framework
- INSARAG can be the basis for establishing standard and coordination system for flood response

- Lessons learned from Libya response should be reflected to the discussion
- There are already existing standards for flood response such as SES and better avoid duplication
- As flood rescue is managed by the maritime authority in the Pacific, NERT can be the system to ensure the synergy especially in-country coordination. And by establishing national level INSARAG WG, Pacific countries can ensure to provide comprehensive feedback to the INSARAG system

3. Localization – NCBWG

- Trial the IRNAP process and synergise accreditation of local teams for Fiji and Pacific Countries

Session 8:
Breakout Discussion of Discussion of Regional Workplan 2024 and Strategy
(Based on the 4 pillars of the Global Strategy)

Purpose of the discussion

- To update and share recommendations for the Regional Workplan 2024 and use the discussion key areas and align with the priorities of the regional Workplan 2023
- To collect the recommendations and feedback from participants in each group and highlight key outcomes in plenary

Discussion Topics

1. Quality Standards (Guidelines, Revised IER system)
2. Localization (IRNAP, First Responders)
3. Regional Position on Flexible Response (FRWG)
4. Partnerships (discuss regional opportunities)

Group 1: Quality Standards (Guidelines, Revised IER system)

Facilitator: Dewey Perks, USA. Note taker: John Cawcutt, Australia

Quality Standards & Compliances

- VO needs to be modernized. Password 20 min
- Terminology of VO and ICMS need to be standardise.
- ICMS must be on application based in addition to webpage
- Deployment of people with the skills sets of the technical capabilities on RDC, UCC & ICMS to help unclassified team.
- The country request needs be tailor made to the country demands example; Structural Engineer, Shoring Technician etc
- Database of Competent person on IEC/IER must be brought up.
- The commitment of Country must strengthen in Quality Assurance
- Forum of innovation and technologies in USAR industries to be establish to all team.
- Database of USAR state condition on deployment. Example: Biosecurity restriction.
- New way to disseminated information throughout the team.
- Sub Regional Pacific Group to be form up to in line with the INSARAG standards
- Technical knowhow incidents happened (AAR) to be disseminated to all country
- National Accreditation Process first, before going international standards.
- Collaboration USAR team and recipient country need to be establish the support.

- Recipient country need reasonable time to establish the country needs with the right assessment.
- The assistance must be established to recipient country with the option of assistance.

Group 2: Localization (IRNAP, First Responders)

Facilitator: Wahyudi L. Putra, Indonesia. Note taker: Chris Lind, New Zealand

Localisation – IRNAP/Capacity Building

- Package available for other components such as floods, swift water, rope rescue, light SAR, and welfare (suitable for teams not physically able to deliver USAR skills) - all to INSARAG methodology.
- NZ has identified that even with three heavy teams we still need to upskill firefighters in remote areas with first responder training tailored to NZ environment
- Focus on other skills to support communities where USAR capability is difficult to develop.
- USAR principles need to remain.
- INSARAG methodology also important.
- Importance of self-sufficiency.
- Importance of assessment function - Quick Capture?
- Feedback of lessons to other countries developing capacity.
- Non-English-speaking countries and navigating access to translators etc
- Each country used to have to provide a plan for capacity building.
 - Noted it is a checklist item.
 - Should form some part of a workplan.
- All Hong Kong staff undertake First Responder training under own criteria.
- Highlighted that a focus just on USAR skills may rescue people but they may not have anywhere to go (shelter, welfare centre, medical facility).
- Are INSARAG Guidelines a burden? - Identified that INSARAG forms the principles and basis for accepting all international assistance.
 - Sets the SOPs and understanding across the system.
 - No requirement to adhere but an understanding and alignment is the key.
 - '*As local as possible*' is key.
 - Partner nations can assist to help with understanding and alignment to INSARAG methodology.
- The importance of thinking more broadly about capacity building.
- Multi-sectoral involvement and improvement, USAR only forms a small part of this.
 - How to lead in the space to lift capability across the system.
 - How to influence and gain buy-in across the EM landscape without undermining other orgs/agencies/systems.
- Poll the member countries to understand where they stand on the first responder/community responder programs.
- How do promote capacity building in the INSARAG system.
- Awareness of how we can provide/what we can offer to influence relevant entities/groups to help the understanding of the benefits of the INSARAG system/family.
 - Continue to promote options available.
 - Importance of influence.
 - Resourcing needs can be a burden, is this a priority for a developing country?
 - Response vs preparedness.
- Level of capability based on local needs as well as partner nations nearby.
 - Able to spread the cost if there is a reciprocal/shared arrangement.
 - What is the capability and capacity required, particularly amongst small populations.
- Advantages of capacity building to BAU response of agencies.
- Ability to share already developed and tailored packages.

- Limited knowledge in some existing first responder capability about INSARAG practices.
- Basic package based on INSARAG that can be built on.
- Common systems are critical to effective response/coordination i.e., ICMS.
- Leveraging other relationships through ministries and agencies e.g., NEMA, MFAT (for Pacific).
 - Strengthening relationships/partnerships.

Group 3: Regional Position on Flexible Response (FRWG)

Facilitator: Ian Duncan, New Zealand. Note taker: Jeremy Stubbs, Australia

Ensure agility and flexibility in various disaster relief scenarios.

- INSARAG has a capability 80% built with additional technical capability that can be added to support the community needs, modular deployment - variable sizes. A modular licence.
- Encourage bilateral agreements that has familiar operating systems – education opportunity.
- INSARAG open to a modular non-compulsory delivery. Allows teams to work beyond their initial assignment.

Forming a flood response WG – in process.

- Common terminology is the benefit for INSARAG; however, this terminology is lost when we use other capabilities – we need to identify the desired effect from a team.

Assess INSARAG's relevance in complex emergency responses – Beyond the rubble.

- Provide a current capability menu to our partners and develop future capability menus required by the community.
- Non-INSARAG classified countries maintain existing bilateral agreements and are adaptable in their requests and support for each other. Not confined by INSARAG thinking.
- Transition INSARAG focus from USAR to DART focus. Modules to be based on the needs of the community.

Group 4: Partnerships (discuss regional opportunities)

Facilitators: Vasiti Soko, Fiji. Note taker: Joseph Miskov, USA

Expanding INSARAG's collaborations especially with UNDAC

- Some countries don't have or need UNDAC; INSARAG awareness raising should be expanded in countries with or without UNDAC, including with LEMAs.
- Some UNDAC staff are unclear on the role of INSARAG and have trouble linking to UCC. UNDAC staff are trained on both humanitarian response and INSARAG, sometimes they understand one more than the other.
- Recommendations:
 - Ensure UNDAC staff are knowledgeable in both humanitarian assistance and INSARAG.
 - Ensure INSARAG is aware of UN systems

Coordinating joint meetings and trainings for efficient deployment

- INSARAG representation/awareness raising at existing platforms like:
 - Regional civ-mil exercises
 - Pacific DRR Ministerial

- Organize regional/pacific pre-disaster meetings to discuss and compare national systems
- Coordinate INSARAG exercises with AHA Centre to allow for full participation.
- Schedule better and further in advance

Engaging OCHA's regional and country offices for enhanced partnerships

- Before OCHA, develop regional capacity, similar to AHA Center.
- Sensitize OCHA to capacities within the region and have conversations about specific needs.
- OCHA could help spread awareness of INSARAG and what it can offer

Online Participants: Pakistan and Solomon Islands

Facilitator: Haruka Ezaki, OCHA. Note taker: Pornpilin Smithveja, OCHA

1. Quality Standards (Guidelines, Revised IER system)

- Increase awareness raising in country level, with support from the regional network
- Mentorship for IER can be an option
- The number of classifiers of IER can be reduced by choosing classifiers who can cover the multiple areas

2. Localization (IRNAP, First Responders)

- IEC teams actively lead contextualizing INSARAG guidelines in the country
- All countries interested in IRNAP to provide resources
- IRNAP should not be excluded to the regional group as some countries have more familiarity with countries outside of the region
- First responder course should be further promoted

3. Regional Position on Flexible Response (FRWG)

- AP regional group support the WG as much as possible to accelerate the progress of establishing common standard
- Flood response IEC system should not overwhelm the current IEC/R system/classifiers.
- Complex emergency: requesting country/body needs to ensure the security of international teams

4. Partnerships (discuss regional opportunities)

- Share calendar of AP regional group training plans and develop a roster of trainers for any request of technical training support
- Use NERT as the synergy at national level INSARAG discussion
- Possible joint exercise with SAARC