AFTER ACTION ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSARAG

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Based on information about the response to the 2023 Türkiye earthquake
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Short version
(comments and context only)

INSARAG
Preparedness Response

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1   Introduction

This report is a shorter version of the After-Action Analysis and Recommendations report based on information about the response to the Feb 6, 2023 earthquake in Turkiye. This version only includes the text on summary comments and context for the 10 topics derived from the analysis. It does not include the recommendations associated with each topic or the answers to the focused review questions.

The intent of this shorter report is to give an overview of the topics addressed by the teams during the 2023 team leader meeting in Singapore, their post-mission reports, and digital tools. For the complete information, please see the full report, shared by the Emergency Response Section, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Geneva, insarag@un.org

2 Comments and Recommendations based on information from USAR teams

2.1 INSARAG system as defined by the INSARAG Guidelines

2.1.1 Speed of mission activation

The speed of the mission, especially the way it starts, is critical for life-saving opportunities. The request from AFAD to OCHA and the notification on the VOSOCC was swift resulting in fast deployment of many teams. Mobilization must be triggered quickly and trained. Teams may decide to mobilize (get ready to deploy) in parallel to the decision-making process of deciding whether to deploy in order to speed up the deployment, and then stand-down if it is decided not to deploy.

2.1.2 Flexibility /Adaptability and ASR levels

The operations showed that USAR operations take many forms and are not always linear from ASR1-4. The teams reported that during the first few days, teams were conducting live rescues across many sites. Due to the life-saving operations, many teams conducted ASR3 and ASR 4 before ARS1 and ASR2 for the first 3-5 days. This surprised some teams who had trained ASR1-4 as a linear process. However, the INSARAG Guidelines clearly state that the ASR levels are not necessarily performed in a linear manner. For example, Manual 2B, page 30 states the following:

> "USAR operations are divided into the five levels listed in the table below. These levels are defined as sequential activities, but, in reality, teams may receive assignments in any order. Especially in large scale operations where LEMA identifies worksites before teams arrive. Or when new areas are being opened throughout the response. Hence different levels of work are being carried out in different areas of the incident at the same moment."

The processes in the INSARG Guidelines are applicable to all types of situations that teams may face in the field, from many collapsed building to a few, from many easily saved victims to mostly deeply entombed victims, to high LEMA support to no LEMA support, etc. Also, there may be situations where there is no functioning LEMA and no operations have taken place prior to the arrival of the INSARAG teams, which is the worst-case scenario the teams need to plan for. Here, teams may have to start with ASR1 operations to identify hot spots and determine sectors. However, the teams could also respond to a country where LEMA is highly active and well organized and has already performed ASR1 and 2 and assigns teams directly to level ASR3 and 4 operations. Additionally, teams may face situations that are a mixture of the two extremes, where some teams are working on ASR 3 and 4 and others on ASR1 and 2. The challenge is on the coordination cells to collect information on the situation on the ground (from OCHA, LEMA, media, teams in the field, locals etc.) and design a response based on the situation and the strength of the teams; it is incumbent upon classified USAR teams that they utilise the USAR coordination methodology. ASR1-4 are tools (different types of assignments) not a procedure, tools to be applied and adapted to different situation. However, the mission showed that many teams only train simple scenarios that require linear response.

Identifying Areas of Responsibility (AOR) was done by LEMA. Incoming teams received their designated area at the RDC's. The UCC made a division of AOR (ASR1) upon their arrival in Hatay. This decision was based on the first incoming reports of ASR2 done by two teams. The number of reported live victims was too high compared to the available international USAR team resources. ASR 2 would have taken too much time and the unanimous decision was made by all TLs present at the first UCC meeting to start with ASR3-4 simultaneously and work with zones (which had been created based on neighbourhood) in the city most and prioritizing the most effected neighbourhoods.

To address the discussion on linearity and flexibility, the following is an account in order of ASR1-4 in Hatay:

Coordination
- ERS requested first arriving full USAR team to support the RDC and then later to manage the UCC.
- ASR1 Wide Area Search: preliminary survey for further planning including geographical hotspots
  - LEMA had done a preliminary assessment and knew where the geographical hotspots were and at the RDC´s/airports, LEMA sent the teams to these locations.

- ASR2: Work-Triage Assessment: identify viable worksites.
  - UCC: Sent recce teams to collect work-site information, who brought back information about the overwhelming number of buildings with easily accessible live victims, compared to the available international USAR teams.
  - UCC: obtained assistance from local fire fighters on how to divide the city into graphical areas (neighbourhood boundaries) and who helped identify priority neighbourhoods.
  - Each team was given a high priority neighbourhood.
- UCC TLM meeting
  - At a UCC meeting, the TLs agreed unanimously to complete sites using ASR 3 and 4 that would take 4 hours (effectively reducing first priority buildings to 4 hours instead of 12 hours).
  - It was agreed that filling in Work-Site Triage forms would slow down the life-saving operation.
  - Only information made available by the teams returning from the worksites was available to the UCC in the first 1-3 days.

Activity within neighbourhoods
- ASR2
  - Within the neighbourhood teams conducted a rapid ASR2–ish before starting on the priority worksite. In practice, this meant walking through the assigned street and start working on the building that, based on experience, was the highest priority.
- ASR3: Rapid Search and Rescue
  - Undertaken
- ASR4: Full Search and Rescue
  - Undertaken at the same time as ASR3, as situation called for.

The order of operations is logical, and linear according to the ASRs, but also adapted to the situation.

2.1.3 Building Marking

Building marking is the oldest and most basic communication tool within INSARAG. In some cases, structural and victim marking were not used, nor were other tracking methodologies due to social and cultural issues. Teams reported difficulties on finding places to mark severely collapsed buildings, how to mark buildings when there were so many buildings, and that locals changed the markings. Some teams reported that it was almost impossible to perform in very damaged buildings. However, no suggestions were offered on how to change the current building marking system.

2.1.4 Triage and survivability in voids

Teams indicated a potential need to re-examine the accepted definitions of "survivable spaces" and "survivable time frames", and the structural triage flow chart and collapse and damage patterns. Some teams use only pancake, lean-to, and V-shape. The first provides minimal areas of refuge or survivable areas, and the others provide voids and several areas to survive in. The first is a building collapse pattern typically for one or more stories, the latter two are more likely to be local damage of an individual building component. For example, some teams encountered buildings in Türkiye that did not pancake (building collapse patten) but crumbled around a central core (local damage). Some teams believed that C category buildings may have been viewed having lesser importance due to complications in triaging them.

One of the best ways to relay information about buildings is through photographs. With the development of digital tools, photos can be use more than previously.

2.1.5 New roles and strengthening roles

Suggestions for new roles or further development of existing roles were provided by the teams: Incident back office back office where the UCC/SCC can get support (possibly linking to an ICMS back office). Logistics coordinator in UCC/SCC, including BoO management. Further develop the role of OCHA ERS as information source during a response, who based on factsheet and travelling plans could pre-task INSARAG teams with coordination functions/tasks to perform on arrival. Team home-offices have to answer their phones 24/7 and see themselves as a key partner in the mission. Due to connectivity problems in the area, the UCC/SCC must be

able to contact team home-office it they cannot reach a team. Include home-office in UC training courses, EREs and IEC/R events

2.2 Phase in, manage, and phase out a USAR coordination system

2.2.1 General

A number of issues were raised on general USAR Coordination. These are converted to recommendations.

2.2.2 RDCs

The first international USAR team members arrived from Istanbul (had been there for training) and set up an RDC. First arriving full USAR team assisted in the RDC. An interpreter offered their assistance to the team and helped provide buses from the city to transport the teams at the airport to the affected area. LEMA directed where the teams should go.

If the RDC fails, the whole mission might fail. It doesn´t matter who does it, meaning teams, UNDAC or LEMA. Consideration should be given to train and prepare for multiple RDCs.

2.2.3 UCC

The first arriving team was asked to manage the UCC, and therefore left the RDC. The team commandeered the bus it used for transport to conduct UCC operations until the team has set up the UCC sent, making the UCC operational from the time of arrival to the affected area. A number of issues were highlighted regarding this process, which ultimately need to be streamlined, and trained in the UC courses, and by OCHA/ERS, UNDAC, and disaster-prone countries. These are converted to recommendations below.

2.2.4 Sectors

The UC Handbook outlines how sectors are a tool of the UCC to manage its span of control:

> *"When a small number of teams responds to a mission, they are directly coordinated by the UCC. However, as the complexity of a mission grows due to the arrival of more teams, increased areas of operation, and/or direction from LEMA, the UCC may decide to divide the operations within the affected area into geographical sectors to increase the effectiveness of the USAR coordination."*

The initial setup by LEMA was a UCC in Hatay, and four sectors in four cities. Later the UCC decide to create a sub-sector with the UCC sector, named SCC5. All the remaining sectors were established by the UCC in Hatay, in collaboration with the UNDAC liaison in the UCC. All of these were small sectors, even down to one international USAR team working with a national team. The strategy employed by the UCC was that every single international USAR team in Türkiye that the UCC knew of would be linked into the USAR coordination system. Therefore, if a team was on its own, it would be its own sector coordinator and take on the responsibilities of a sector coordinator and would be in direct contact with the UCC. This strategy greatly helped the UCC maintain its connections with all teams, directly or indirectly. The UCC had daily contact with the SCCs. To help the sectors communicate with their own teams, the UCC created a space on the VOSOCC dedicated to each SCC. This also reduced the number of times that the UCC and SCC needed to have direct contact, as they could retrieve information from the VOSOCC. In this way the UCC had oversight of the entire operations. The weakness in supporting the teams was mainly two-fold. The UCC did not have strategical guidance from the LEMA on how to move the operations forward, so all decisions and support was based on minute-to-minute information. There were problems in the beginning regarding connectivity, but that improved with time. As the operations in different sectors gradually ended, first the smaller sectors and then the larger one, the UCC closed the sectors. The last remaining sectors were handed over to AFAD.

Coordination of SCCs
- Sectorization is a tool for the UCC to manage span of control.
- Daily contact with the assigned SCC is important using on-site meetings or VTC meetings.

- Later: never use letters for sectors, always numbers due to ability to expand. And we will never run out of letters and be looking at the sector number, we know in which city it is.
- How to deal with teams that split up and work in more than one sector. It can be confusing for UCC if teams have the same ID in multiple the sectors. Break off groups could be given sub-numbers. For example, a team that has two break outs and works in three sectors would have three IDs: XXX01, XXX01.1 and XXX01.2.

2.2.5   Phasing out

The first announcement of closing was on the 15th 11:00 that the USAR Coordination would transition from a Physical UCC to a Virtual RDC at midnight tonight (15th) and teams not demobilizing will be transferred to AFAD for coordination. UNDAC will open and run a Virtual RDC. The UCC put guidelines for the SCCs regarding Demobilization and Mission Summary Forms on the VOSOCC. Later, this decision was changed and announced that the Government of Türkiye would continue to accept international relief teams to support the current disaster and from 16 February 2023, 0001hrs, the UCC will continue to be physically functioning in Hatay. The last life saved by international teams was on the 14th.

Either the UCC staff manages the phasing out of the coordination system or hands over to LEMA. Examples of activities performed during the dismantling of the UC system in Türkiye were: Deciding when to stop USAR operations, supporting donation handovers, collecting mission reports, possibly reactivating RDCs, supporting beyond the rubble activities, and closing SCCs. Of these examples, the most commonly mentioned by the teams was lack of clarity of the end-of-USAR operations (or End-of International-USAR-Phase) or declaration thereof. Support for donating equipment to locals was also requested. See also section on End-of-International-USAR declaration.

2.2.6   Working with UNDAC

The role of UNDAC in supporting USAR Coordination is mandated in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 57/150 of 2002 and states that "Commending the work of the United Nations Disaster Assistance and Coordination teams in facilitating rapid need assessments and assisting Member States to organize the on-site coordination of international urban search and rescue operations". The UNDAC Liaison is the link to the OSOCC. The role of an UNDAC liaison in an international USAR mission is outlined in the UC Handbook (section 8): Advocacy (be catalyst to OCHA and LEMA and other partners), Strategy (on issues such as end of operations, Beyond the Rubble, etc.), Logistical and other Operational support (share information on health issues, safety and security, logistics etc.)

UNDAC liaisons were situated in the larger SCCs that were defined by LEMA at the beginning of the operations, and in the UCC. The support provided by UNDAC liaisons varied in these locations, the variety mainly stemming from different levels of INSARAG knowledge by the UNDAC members. Further comments mentioned that UNDAC/OSOCC needs to be proactive in delivering information to international USAR teams and should have knowledge on how to use ICMS if they are delegated to support the coordination.

The initial coordination when teams arrive is a critical part of establishing the USAR coordination system. Some UNDAC members deployed with teams. Most UNDAC members travelled by commercial flights and therefore arrived after the first arriving teams. Contact information was put on the VOSOCC while UNDAC members were travelling and caused misunderstanding among the USAR teams. Many teams tried to contact UNDAC members who were travelling to get the latest information, but they could not connect to them or they had no information since the members just got off the plane.

The connection between UNDAC and the UCC is crucial. While the UCC could operate without UNDAC guidance or support, the stronger the connection between UNDAC and UCC the more successful the operations are likely to be, especially if the ties to LEMA are not strong. The UNDAC and INSARAG coordination structures were very large. In all operations, especially in such large operations, the highest ranking UCC and OSOCC manager should be in direct contact and together outline a communication and reporting line between the two structures, including the locations of liaisons in the UCC and in OSOCCs and Sub-OSOCCS.

Expectations of international USAR teams of what UNDAC support entails needs to be better understood. Some teams consulted UNDAC in the decisions to demobilize. The role of UNDAC in RDCs (for USAR, EMTs, and relief teams) needs to better be outlined in the UC Handbook for the international USAR teams.

There is a disconnect between the expectations of UNDAC and INSARAG on the participation of USAR teams in collecting humanitarian information during the period of life saving operations. There is more agreement for the period after the live-saving period. Different expectations can cause tension in the field.

2.3 Working with LEMA

2.3.1 Connections with LEMA at every level

While the coordination within the UCC/SCCs and RDCs are critical to successful USAR operations, equally so is coordination with LEMA. As outlined in the UC Handbook, each coordination cell should have a LEMA contact and work closely with them on the operations.

2.3.2 UCC and LEMA Connection

The connection between LEMA and the UCC is crucial. While UCC can operate without LEMA guidance or support, the stronger the connection between LEMA and UCC is, the more successful the operations are likely to be. A UCC has two main objectives; to coordinate teams in its AOR, and to create and coordinate sectors in order to manage span of control of the UCC. It can decide to put all teams under sector coordinators in other locations; the situation on the ground will determine such decisions. However, the better the guidance and support on these matters from LEMA on establishing new relationships, the better.

2.3.3 Working with LEMA

Numerous comments were made on working with LEMA. A significant portion were on issues that addressed logistics and are presented in the section on logistics.

2.3.4 Managing expectations of LEMA support

Comments from teams on their expectations of LEMA support were many. Teams are working in countries that are suffering a large disruption to their normal activities where normal response capacity, administrative arrangements, etc. may have been severely reduced. The INSARAG Guidelines outline what realistic expectations are from the network to LEMA in order to support the country and not become a burden on it.

2.3.5 Declaring End of International USAR operations

INSARAG continues to follow the guidance that only the affected government can announce the end of the USAR phase. Teams noted that during this deployment, there was no declaration of the end of the USAR operations phase, but there was a thank you message to those leaving, and one of gratitude to those staying. Deciding when to leave is a critical part of the operations. Many teams made their own decision when to leave based on the trend of opportunities for lives to be saved. A better understanding of the issues regarding making decisions about the end of international USAR operations, and determining demobilization strategies is needed, both by INSARAG and LEMA. This includes considering the strength of the national teams to continue the remaining activities. The issue of how political and cultural perspectives are considered also need to be discussed. USAR operations might continue after all international teams have left.

2.3.6 Donation process

When demobilizing, many teams donated equipment to in-country entities (LEMA, locals, NGOs, to other rescue teams, to EMTs, and others). This is completely voluntary and of their own accord. The teams experienced different channels for this process. Not all donations were accepted, and, in some cases, there was difficulty in finding responsible persons as local receivers of humanitarian aid and donation. Donations included rescue equipment, shelter/tents, medical equipment, generators, food and water. There was a call to donate equipment to NW Syria, which OCHA/UNDAC would coordinate and advise on.

2.3.7   Beyond the rubble (BtR)

Teams reported that limited BtR activities were accepted, not many activities needed to be done within the scope; very limited interactions; and there should be no BtR during live rescue operations. Some stated that there was no need to get involved with humanitarian help, saying that a lot of other local volunteers were around to cover this. The teams that arrived later/late were more willing to participate in BtR activities. Some teams participated in supporting Relief Distribution. Some team engineers were willing to participate in E-DACC (not reported how long were the engineers were willing to stay). Support for engineering damage assessments and coordination thereof was offered but was not accepted due to Turkish strength in structural engineering.

2.3.8   Training of LEMA

As it is recognized that the stronger the relationship with LEMA is in coordination and logistical support, the likelihood for successful missions increase. It follows that the more prepared LEMA is, the better the relationship between INSARAG and LEMA will be. Teams suggest providing enhanced guidance to member states on incorporating USAR coordination principles into national disaster preparedness and response plans, including USAR assessment. The question arises, what is INSARAGs view (or role) on putting their resources into LEMA trainings in earthquake prone countries? Associated with this question is how LEMA integrates national INSARAG teams into their response plans.

2.4   Logistics

2.4.1   Topics before arrival

Fast deployments require LEMA to share information on logistics quickly. Teams listed topics that are critical at the beginning of their mobilization, meaning before they leave their country, and could have an effect on whether they deploy or how they plan their deployment.

2.4.2   Topics upon arrival

Topics of Information provided on arrival in addition to those provided before arrival addressed both what information and from whom

2.4.3   Topics during mission

Teams answered questions on logistical needs with the highest demand that were not solved. Due to the many different locations in the disaster, the different times teams arrived, and the different resourcefulness that the teams show, the teams experience was also different in what worked and what did not. Attention should be given to the negative experiences when reviewing logistical guidelines and LEMA training.

2.5   Information management

2.5.1   Virtual OSOCC

The VOSOCC was used as real-time online coordination platform and allowed for information exchange „early" during the emergency. VOSOCC has a simple given structure that needs to facilitate the information sharing duirng the delpoyment. And it Is used by many other disaster response actors, so other activities than USAR is also presented.

Usually, the documents that are uploaded by an USAR team are: a) Team Fact sheet; b) Demobilization form c) Sit rep (it is not a file) d) Maps e) Mission summary; and f) Update about activities.
The use of the VOSOCC by USAR teams and also by other relief team is not always regulated. In many occasions, teams upload the documents in the wrong folder making the information collection very challenging.

- Test the possibility setting up a system to use SMS, Whatsapp, and other messaging applications to send FACT sheets to the VOSOCC/ICMS. This would relieve the need to log onto VOSOCC/ICMS and would help with low connectivity problems.
- Impossible to follow the information on the VOSOCC.
- There are many ways to communicate. We need to have a dedicated 'chat channel' somewhere.
- We can´t finalize this type of comms plans until we are in the field.
- We have rules for VOSOCC, but we will always break the rules. If you only have internet access for 10 sec you will take the route that takes the least time, and that may be on the VOSOCC.
- UCC needs to be able to delete information from VOSOCC and to verify info, i.e., have admin rights. Should there be a dedicated person for that? Who should have done that?

Virtual OSOCC statistics

Earthquake occurrence: 6 Feb 2023, 01:17 UTC
GDACS Alert sent on 6 Feb 01:40 UTC (23 min after event)
Virtual OSOCC discussion created on 6 Feb 2023 05:09 UTC (3h 52 min after the event, 3h 29 after GDACS alert)
Alerted rosters
- United Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)
    - Alerted: on 6-Feb-2023 08:02 (6h 45 min after the event)
    - First wave: deployed between 6 and 15 Feb (23 UNDAC members, 29 support staff from Atlas Logistics, IHP, iMMAP, MapAction, Reach Initiative, TFS, WFP)
    - Second wave: deployed between 22 Feb and 8 Mar (15 UNDAC members)
- Environmental experts:
    - Alerted on 8 Feb (no info on VOSOCC environmental experts deployed)

Virtual OSOCC information exchange and coordination
- Discussion followed by 2230 disaster managers and related experts from 96 Member States and 296 organizations
- 12 moderators supported the online discussion
- 2520 comments provided by 363 persons
- 833 files uploaded by 201 persons
- 241 relief teams registered by 186 persons
    - Deployed teams:
        - 119 Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
        - 18 WHO Emergency Medical Teams (EMT)
        - 10 Assessment and Coordination
        - 3 Telecoms and ITC
        - 2 Logistics
        - 1 Environmental
        - 5 Other
- Classified or accredited USAR Teams that had uploaded Fact Sheet by 18.2.2023:

IEC heavy	22
IEC light	5
IEC medium	20
NAP/IRNAP heavy	1
NAP/IRNAP light	1
NAP/IRNAP medium	2
Not IEC classified or NAP/IRNAP accredited	42
Total	**93**

- 39 maps uploaded by 10 persons
- Last input: 25-May-2023 10:48 (discussion was archived)
- Duration: 242 days

Teams identified problems in the use of the Virtual OSOCC. The information flow on Virtual OSOCC was deemed pretty chaotic and teams did not use it as intended. As an example, there are teams still listed as „Monitoring" when the event has been closed.

Challenges with uploads
- Some teams tried to keep posting really essential info but found retrieving important information from all the number of posts challenging. Despite the presence of specific folders, information was uploaded everywhere forcing the coordination system to move information from one folder to another. Teams are not updating their fact sheet; according to the VOSOCC, some teams are still monitoring, mobilising, or there.

Challenges with downloads
- Teams found it challenging to extract relevant information from the VOSOCC due to the quick turnover of information.

VOSOCC as a communication tool
- Many teams only used the VOSOCC, and therefore maybe overused it or used it incorrectly. Teams agreed that it should be used for the most important messages and not as communication tool.
- The VOSOCC is not a chat room.
- Teams should never write personal messages, not even in solitude. VOSOCC is not the teams' logbook.
  - If all other communication is down, VOSOCC may be the only option. But if so, with the current overload there is a risk that the comments will not be seen.

Problems with both Virtual OSOCC and ICMS
- Some teams were confused as to having to monitor both VOSOCC and ICMS for worksite assignments; which one is the priority, though this did not apply to all sectors)? Or should they be flexible as one may overlook the other. Teams stated there is a disconnect between the VOSOCC and ICMS. Teams suggested an update VOSOCC guidelines for USAR in posting what, where, when, which finds a way to control input, so it is not as hard to find information.
  - UCC/SCC should inform teams on how they get assignments.

Location information
- When giving GPS coordinates, also provide addresses and landmarks that locals understand. When sharing information about LEMA, include the type of institution LEMA is, names of LEMA and contact information. Caution should be taken about posting contact information, since the VOSOCC is open source. Once you enter contact information, 10,000 people now have that information.

Team name vs. Team ID
- It is easier to work with Team ID on the VOSOCC than team names. Have the first column under All relief teams Team ID (not team name)

Therefore, the questions are
- what information is uploaded onto the VOSOCC, by whom, and why.
- What if there is vital information from USAR or other resources on the ground, and ICMS by any reason doesn't work – how they will inform if comments are not allowed?

Assumptions
- Negative: Too much randomly posted information that is not being found or not being used.
- Positive: Critical information being shared (status of request, ICMS login)
- Positive: Good to give each SCC their own area on the VOSOCC.
- It is not a two-way communications channel (or find a way to control comment overload).
- Focus on its purpose as a messaging board – one-way communication.
- Addressing the problem of too many or inappropriate comments.
  - Reduce the ability to write comments while encouraging contact via other means (email, phone, messaging applications, etc.), or ...
  - Don´t reduce the comments, rather create appropriate space/organize the comment section. The beauty of having a comment section is by addressing one comment, the information can be shared to all users. Bilateral conversation can be difficult during the initial phase of response when the operation is still chaotic.
- Set up a structure that is easy to follow when posting of looking for information
- The difference between VOSOCC and ICMS is

- o   Information uploaded on ICMS is from the INSARAG forms.
- o   Forms or information from forms should not be posted on the VOSOCC.
- o   Information uploaded on the VOSOCC can relate to all other information
- Users
  - o   Teams in the field.
  - o   Home/HQ: for deployment, decision making, briefings at home
  - o   United Nations
  - o   Non-INSARAG teams: VOSOCC becomes the main coordinating tools for them instead of ICMS
  - o   LEMA, humanitarian teams, partners, research and information entities, and others.
  - o   General public, including media.
- There will always be a need to monitor the VOSOCC.
- UCC/SCC USAR team staff member have administrator rights to delete information on the VOSOCC.

2.5.2   Are we collecting too much information?

Information management is about the creation, use, retention, preserving and disposing of information. There were numerous comments on information collection, in particular how much to collect and when to collect. It is possible to capture lots of information, especially in large-scale disasters, however, this activity requires time when the focus must be the urgency of rescue work versus filling in forms. Are we collecting too much information in too short time, or simply too much information that is hard to retrieve and utilize? Are we losing the ability to speak with survivors by being deeply focused on a form? The mission showed that the expectation of first filling in forms can be different from the reality. Therefore, it is important to prioritize timely and crucial information needed for coordination. A distinction could be done between:
- Urgent **information** that are needed to improve the coordination, monitor and analyse the trends of the situation.
- Secondary **information** that can be added when the team is less busy with specific extraction operations.

A review of Worksite forms is required to ensure they meet the needs of USAR teams. The Worksite Triage Form was considered way too extensive for the basic and simple task it, i.e., serves discriminating viable worksites amidst the mayhem. Key question is, what is the information being used for? Does it have real-time purpose or is it to analysis later? The review needs to include the different situations the teams are working in, from Blitz mode (many live rescues) to only working with C and D-buildings. A revision of a quicker worksite adoption form should be included.

2.5.3   ICMS Software

The ICMS software is a digital representation of the paper forms. While there is overall praise for ICMS, the main comments from teams were on the challenges and suggestions for improvement and that the ICMS may benefit from refinement to simplify access and use. Teams had difficulty capturing information on rescues in the early days so there is a need to identify minimum information collection and understand the delays in that being collected.

ICMS Challenges identified by teams
- Despite the much-appreciated remote support of the IMWG on ICMS and 123Survey, 123 Survey, is especially too extensive to be of use in the situation our team experienced. ICMS was not supporting input of information for teams. ICMS including Survey 123 forms are too time consuming. How can its complexity be reduced? There is a need to define what information is needed to manage teams and to coordinate. Find solution or strategy for solution to teams logging on multiples times. Find ways to increase the supply and use of photos.

Suggestions for flexibility
- Ensure that ICMS is designed for objectives, not for information collection. The structure of ICMS needs to be redesigned or re-addressed in some way to meet the goal of supporting INSARAG operations. Ensure that ICMS has the flexibility that INSARAG needs for different type of operation and roles. Adapt

ICMS for flexibility in types of assignments that are not based on WS triage forms, e.g., be able to assign teams to work-areas.

Suggestions for simplifications
- Simplify due to information content. Simplify due to being too complicated. Simplify ICMS regarding updating forms. Simplify ICMS for lower skill set maintenance. Can ICMS be more intuitive? Change or explain the one-way aspect of ICMS. How will it be made more user friendly? We need a "short and quick" information collecting sheet and tool. Just a picture location option should be considered.

Suggestions regarding ASR and linearity
- While a UCC/SCC can easily adapt paper forms to different situations in assigning ASR levels, the software is not so easily adapted as it assumes a completed work-site triage form to register worksites and does not allow a UCC to assign teams to work-areas. Therefore, the ASR concept in connection with the ICMS concept has to be developed.

Comments regarding Sector ID Worksite ID and team ID
- UCC used follow-up (additional level of detail) ID logarithm that turned out not to be supported by ICMS. Incomplete sectorizing due to numbering constraints of ICMS; review sector ID. Find solution to Worksite ID naming problems. Unique Worksite ID should be delinked from the sector. Address the issue of teams taking direct assignments from local coordination without allocation of worksite ID from UCC/SSC, how to allow them to mark identification number to their worksites to be uploaded on ICMS. Ensuring worksites receive their own identification will help ensure coordination is performed efficiently. Update the current guidelines to reflect a numbering system that can be used on large events. The coordination system has to be able to manage teams who decide to split and work in different sectors and have different BoO locations, as they will have same team ID. Registering non-INSARAG teams. Call Signs allocations for non-classified teams. Be only able to assign one team to a work-site.

Connectivity and bandwidth
- Teams and LEMA need to address connectivity issues. ICMS needs too much information bandwidth. We should strive to make it easy and as low tech as possible solutions for the work on the rubble. There should be a "low bandwidth" version of ICMS. Use of low bandwidth messages. ICMS should have a fast mode for the first stages of the response and for external teams. A system with Online/slow connection/offline mode and Fast/regular/advanced mode. Telecom partners to deploy as support to ICMS onsite. Disaster-related communication systems can be explored, such as the use of the mesh networking system.

2.5.4 Other digital tools

Teams were asked to share tools that they used during the mission:
- ArcGIS. ASIGN pro. Beidou Short Message Service. Copernicus images. Crisis 24, Digital offline maps app, DJI Terra for mapping. Email (which one?). Engage System. Gmail. Google. Google Drive. Google maps. GPS tracking. IMBox. Mapping services (which ones?). Mapsme. Mission Manager/Mission Responder tool (ESRI). MS-Teams. Ozi explorer. QGIS. QuickCapture. Satellite phone. Signal. SMS. Telegram. VOSOCC, WA group organised by SCC. Wechat. what3words. WhatsApp. World Bank shakes maps. Voice mail (Would need a database to search the data).
- What to use will be determined whether it is a locked, or unlocked phone…if the phone is owned by a government or organisation, can apps be added?

2.6 Medical

Medical activities beyond USAR medicine included treatments and assessment of the medical infrastructures. The Medical Working Group has addressed the following:

Crush syndrome
- The MWG plans to post protocol for crush syndrome (updated in 2019) on the INSARAG website as a technical reference note. Or should the protocols be incorporated into the Guidelines rather than technical reference notes, to give it more weight and attention.
- What further socialization of the concepts of crush syndrome is being planned?

Amputations

- The MWG plans to post protocol for amputations (updated in 2011) on the INSARAG website as a technical reference note.
- What further socialization of the concepts of crush syndrome is being planned?

Mental well-being of USAR teams

- What is the status of a technical reference note on high-level recommendations that could remain culturally appropriate and feasible for teams in the INSARAG family?

2.7   Safety and security issues

The teams experienced a wide range of safety and security circumstances, from no significant challenges, no security problem on site with population, but from good collaboration to hostile situations. Many locals were thankful and eager to assist in whichever means possible, such as food, gas or even setup a fire for the rescuers to warm themselves. Team contribution includes best practices is cultural awareness and compassion. Understanding and appreciating the scale of the loss allows personnel to de-escalate situations. Appropriate protocols when rescuer was injured were applied. Being assigned interpreter to explain to the people about safety, police officers, AFAD liaisons and transport added to safety and security.

Negative reports on safety included working close to heavy machinery, working in unstable structures, aftershocks, and driving.

Negative reports on security included a small problem near a BoO because many people gathered to take someone involved in a crime. Türkiye government sent several armed military personnel to protect the teams. Many teams reported gunshot incidents to UCC and got support from LEMA. These appeared to be warning shots and not targeted to international humanitarian relief operations. One team reported serious internal abuse where a team member was physically abused by another USAR team TL!!!

Negative reports regarding crowds among locals.
- We paused pro-active operations due to reports of Civil unrest during help goods delivery; everyone goes to worksite once they saw the victims creating a safety issue.
- Local ppl harassed our teams in some areas.
- When closing sites down, number of people were on rubble pile.
- Moving from one worksite without viable rescues to another.
- It was difficult informing locals about abandoning a site. We managed these situations because we had a team member from Türkiye.
- An armoured vehicle was positioned at the BoO entrance. Teams at BoO requested it to be moved away.
- Crowd control was also an issue in NW Syria.
- Report: The team learned that the locals may become very hostile and aggressive toward rescue crews as search and rescue operations took time to reach any tangible result. One of the typical examples was when the team operated at the first site. After extricating two dead bodies, the team could not detect any live victim reaction. Therefore, the team decided to stop the operation and leave the scene. However, the locals approached to the team and requested it to stay longer. If the team did not explain to the locals carefully, there was a possibility that the team would face anti-empathy. In such case, the team may face aggression without any security guarantee from the local police or the military forces. Fortunately, interpreters of the team mediated and patiently persuaded the locals, and the team managed to leave the scene without any problems. It was a reminder for the team to pay more attention to enhance security as well as safety, in engaging search and rescue operations in an abroad setting.

2.8   Team responsibilities – taking ownership

Some teams identified the need to for teams to take ownership of their own operations during missions and being responsible for their own training.

2.9 Training

2.9.1 More training

The first key message from the teams on training was for more training. The comments regarding training are converted to recommendations below.

It was pointed out that the benefit of training is not only to improve the ability of teams to operate but to understand the benefits of the UC system and are therefore more likely to provide resources, thereby addressing the compliancy issue. Issues mentioned are expanded in the recommendations.

2.9.2 More variety in training

The second key message from the teams on training was for training to include a variety of scenarios to develop skills in building coordination systems and planning assignments.

2.10 Compliance and IEC/R

2.10.1 Compliance

Classified teams are required to contribute trained RDC/UCC/UCC personnel. While it is known that numerous teams who were asked to take on a coordination role in an RDC or UCC declined to do so, there was little discussion in the documents about why the teams did not comply with this procedure, which is stated clearly in the INSARAG Guidelines, and reinforced in the UC Handbook. One solution in Adana RDC was as a single member who deployed from a non-classified team and performed well. This demonstrates fortunate situations that may occur not an example of best practice. The mission showed that it is not only the first team to an affected country that should provide equipment and UC trained personnel for supporting the RDC/UCC/SCC, but **all** incoming teams. Teams can be asked to manage a UCC/SCC/RDC from the beginning to the end of the mission. Logistical issues relating to opportunities dictated when some teams left (getting transport with other teams/national airlines). There was also a lack of compliance from LEMA´s side, who did not allow RDC´s to be set up in all ports of entry.

During the 2023 mission to Türkiye, over 15 countries participated in the USAR coordination. Many teams showed dedicated commitment to USAR coordination, which should not be forgotten in the midst of the discussion of non-compliance.

2.10.2 IEC/R

The suggestions regarding how to use the lessons from the mission to improve the IEC/Rs are numerous and diverse and focus on
- Logistics, BoO, Operations,
- Team management operations-incl. leadership challenges
- International coordination UCC/SCC Recommendations:
- Interaction with other teams
- Safety/Security

3 New Collaborations and Trainings

New collaborations and trainings in

1. Strategy, Operations, and Technical Search
2. Team management and USAR Coordination
3. Logistics
4. Localization
5. Non-INSARAG Teams

Turkey

Samsun
Vezirköprü
Corum
Tokat
Sivas
Ordu
Giresun
Trabzon
Rize
Bingöl
Elazığ
Kayseri
Malatya
Diyarbakir
Ba
Adıyaman
Mardin
Marash
Şanlıurfa
Osmaniye
Gaziantep
Adana
Aleppo
Raqqa
Latakia

Syria

Hama

INSARAG
Preparedness Response