



CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION

International Search and Rescue Guidelines (INSARAG) Awareness Training Course

Zagreb, 27 - 29 April 2009

Organized by Southeast Europe Security Cooperation Steering Group (SEEGROUP) in close cooperation with the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) for South Eastern Europe, The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and RACVIAC

RACVIAC - CENTRE FOR SECURITY COOPERATION conducted an International Search and Rescue Guidelines (INSARAG) Awareness Training Course in Zagreb, Croatia, from 27th to 29th April 2009 with the above-mentioned organizations.



Course participants (18 participants, 5 faculty and 2 staff)

Background of the INSARAG

Since the creation of INSARAG in 1991, significant progress has been made in improving standards for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) assistance and the coordination of international response to major sudden-onset disasters. The achievements of INSARAG include the establishment of a worldwide network of stakeholders in disaster response and the development of the INSARAG

Common understanding of disasters and rescue procedures shortens the rescue time, and saves lives.



Course opening (Left to right: UN expert Ms Nihan ERDOGAN, NATO EADRCC Mr Esa AHLBERG, SEEGROUP representatives Mr Muharem JUSUFI, Director of RACVIAC AMB Nedžad HADŽIMUSIĆ and Program Manager LtCol Nemeth KALMAN)

Guidelines. The commitment of INSARAG member countries and organizations is best illustrated by the UN General Assembly's

unanimous adoption of Resolution 57/150 on "*Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International Urban Search and Rescue Assistance*" on 16 December 2002. This Resolution endorses the INSARAG Guidelines to be used as the reference for international USAR and disaster response.

The goal of INSARAG

In periods between disasters, INSARAG aims to increase awareness in international USAR response. This is achieved through training and the facilitation of exercises designed to evaluate a country's ability to deal with a disaster that exceeds its local capacity and therefore requires international assistance. Furthermore, INSARAG, in conjunction with its partners, will continue to develop international USAR best practice and international relationships.



Explaining the use of specific equipment

Working methodology

In the two working days of the course 18 students from 9 Southeast European countries increased their understanding of the INSARAG Guidelines and were encouraged to develop light Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams. The objective of the Course was to improve knowledge on how to respond to earthquake situations. This was a train-the-trainers course and it educated the countries (USAR teams) according to the INSARAG guidelines and

provided expertise in USAR team preparations (equipment, procedures etc.).

The course was divided into lectures and group discussions. The training was based on a high degree of participants' involvement. During the course, the participants took active part in plenary and group discussions and readily shared their experience with each other.



The Croatian National Protection and Rescue Directorate presented the basic equipment for light USAR teams.

In the initial part Ms Nihan ERDOGAN from the INSARAG Secretariat gave a theoretical introduction of the INSARAG: its history, mission, ongoing activities and future involvements. After that she presented the Guidelines, whose aim is to provide a methodology for the country affected by a sudden onset of disaster causing large-scale structural collapse, as well as to provide international USAR teams responding to the affected country. She also outlined the role of UN assisting affected countries in on-site coordination. She triggered a huge discussion, which was endorsed by the participants. The participants found INSARAG very necessary and promising for the region. After giving further details about INSARAG Mr Esa AHLBERG presented the syndicate work, where the participants had to solve a given task and present it to the plenary. The aim was to find a common understanding of the theoretical initial part of the course.

Summary

At the end of the two-day seminar the participants understood and were able to use INSARAG guidelines and methodology and they also understood the international USAR response coordination system.



Explaining the use of specific equipment

Since the knowledge of Urban search and Rescue is essential for common activities or co-operation between SEE countries and the international community, the participants sincerely believe that these kind of courses need to be organized in the future in a more specific way. Furthermore, they are convinced that they should be organized in the whole spectrum of Disaster management issues. They found the practical work challenging because it brought out new questions for discussion.

The important feature of the Course is the opportunity to host the participants and lecturers from all the countries interested and observe a unique cooperative and friendly spirit among them.

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at
www.racviac.org

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Plenary discussion

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