**INSARAG proposed standardised communication:**

**Requesting permission for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Medical Teams to practise**

**Purpose**

USAR teams have, as an essential function, medical components that are integral to the overall team mission. The ability to practise medicine is regulated in very specific ways by each country. Typically, a Ministry of Health (or the equivalent) provides medical licensure to practise medicine.

To be fully successful in contributing to team mission, the USAR medical team must be allowed to practise medicine, within the scope of USAR activities, in the impacted country.

This proposed communication is for INSARAG classified USAR teams deploying to impacted countries. If a donor country does not already have bilateral arrangements or does not have its own process, the following can be utilised to seek acceptance to practise USAR medicine.

The intent is to have prior acceptance of USAR medical teams to practise medicine so that there is no delay of rescue operations upon the team’s arrival in the country.

INSARAG proposes the donor country contacts the affected country as early as possible to seek permission for USAR medical teams to practice.

**Template communication:**

In initial communications with impacted countries regarding the acceptance of USAR teams, it is recommended the following elements be addressed:

1. Brief background statement on USAR medicine

Example language:

Delivery of medical care to patients while they are still entrapped in collapsed structures is an essential lifesaving activity and disentanglement and rescue can take many hours. During this phase, patients are at particular risk and medical intervention may be required throughout. Medical care during USAR operations extends until the point of patient handover.

1. Clarification of roles

Example language:

The [Donor Country Name] USAR medical team is prepared to fulfill the following roles:

* Care of USAR team members including search dogs
* Care of individuals entrapped in the rubble
* Other agreed tasks as requested by the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA) and which may include “beyond the rubble” activities.

1. Explicit request that permission to practise be granted

Example language:

In order to practise USAR medicine, [Donor Country] requests that the [Accepting Authority, e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs] provides temporary permission to practise USAR medicine from the responsible Ministry in [impacted country name] for the duration of the deployment.

1. Offer to provide medical licensure documents:

Example language:

Full medical licensure documents of the medical individuals who will be deploying as part of the USAR team can be provided prior to deployment if required.

5) Statement of acceptance

The donor country should request the impacted country to respond with permission to practise.

Example language:

[Donor Country] requests that the [Accepting Authority, e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs] confirms in writing that the USAR medical team has permission to practice USAR medicine in the affected country.