



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EUROPEAN CIVIL PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN AID
OPERATIONS (ECHO)

Emergency Response Coordination Centre

Civil Protection Emergency Response Capabilities

Guidelines

“Recertification and reregistration” of response capacities in the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP)

October 2025

Document history

Version # - Date	Changes made
Version 1 – March 2020	Adoption of recertification guidelines
Version 2 – October 2025	Amended recertification criteria, new format for the self-assessment checklist, Validation Visit without a peer certifier, documents forming the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) listed, streamlined procedure for twin capacities also applies to recertification

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ABBREVIATIONS

CECIS	Common Emergency Communication and Information System
CP	Civil Protection
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
ECPP	European Civil Protection Pool
EMT	Emergency Medical Team
ERCC	Emergency Response Coordination Centre
FX	Field exercise
INSARAG	International Search and Rescue Advisory Group
MS	Member State
MODEX	Module exercise
PoE	Portfolio of Evidence
PS	Participating State
UCPM	Union Civil Protection Mechanism
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
VV	Validation visit
WHO	World Health Organization

RECERTIFICATION FRAMEWORK

Introduction and Legal Basis

The Commission Implementing Decision 2025/704/EU provides that: *“If the Member State re-commits the same response module, other response capacity or TAST to the ECPP, the certification of that response capacity shall be reassessed at the latest after 5 years.”* (Article 15).

Based on this legal framework, these guidelines shall provide practical guidance to Member States and UCPM Participating States¹ for the recertification of emergency response capacities committed to the European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP). They offer practical information to prepare for and navigate the recertification process efficiently and systematically. While not being legally binding, Member States are expected to follow these guidelines to the maximum possible extent.

The guidelines are part of a broader “ECPP toolbox”, which compiles all relevant information and tools that pertain to the ECPP, including the certification and registration process and the possibilities for financial support through adaptation grants. The toolbox is available on the [Civil Protection Knowledge Network](#).

For clarifications, questions or suggestions, please contact the ECPP team in DG ECHO via ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu.

Purpose and objectives of the ECPP recertification

The guidelines provide practical guidance for each phase of the recertification of ECPP response capacities. Furthermore, the guidelines define the respective roles of Member States Civil Protection authorities, the management staff of ECPP capacities, and representatives of the Commission (DG ECHO). The overall aim of the recertification process is to ensure continuous improvement and quality assurance of response capacities registered in the ECPP.

The recertification process verifies if continuous investments were made in maintaining and developing the capacity in the period following the initial certification, to ensure continued compliance with ECPP standards.

The recertification keeps the same focus as the initial certification, assessing self-sufficiency, interoperability, preparedness and coordination². The capacity is assessed based on the results of its initial certification as well as its development until its recertification. The recertification usually takes place five years after the initial certification or latest recertification. The

¹ In light of Article 28(1a) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU, where reference is made to Member States, it shall be understood as including Participating States as defined in Article 4(12) of Decision No 1313/2013/EU

² cf. [guidelines for ‘certification and registration’](#)

capacity's development – gained through training courses, exercises, deployment and other investments - is evaluated based on documentary evidence.

The Commission may approve a one-year extension of the ECPP certification on a case-by-case basis, for example, when a capacity is not able to fulfil the recertification criteria on time due to well-justified and documented reasons.

Recertification criteria

A capacity applying for recertification has already successfully completed its certification procedure. Therefore, the recertification follows a less comprehensive process. The recertification criteria are:

1. Whether the team has attended an international field exercise (e.g. MODEX field exercise, EU-funded full-scale exercise, other international field exercise) or has been deployed internationally in an UCPM response operation in the three-year period preceding the recertification due date.
2. Whether the team has been deployed in national emergency response operations.
3. Whether the team has been engaged in national exercises.
4. Whether the team has invested in trainings for management personnel and team members.
5. Whether the team has addressed areas of improvement described in the certification report or in the previous recertification report.
6. Whether the team has maintained or improved its capacity by introducing new equipment, training courses and other relevant measures.
7. Whether changes in team composition, structures, procedures, or other aspects since the initial certification or last recertification have enhanced the capacity's performance.

The Member State must provide documentary evidence for each recertification criteria in a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE). As part of the PoE, the Member State are required to complete a self-assessment checklist so that the response capacity can be assessed against these criteria for the period following the initial certification or last recertification.

To be recertified, the response capacity must comply with the first recertification criteria, and at least four of the remaining ones.

For the Field Exercise, the capacity's training objectives should reflect recommendations made in the certification report.

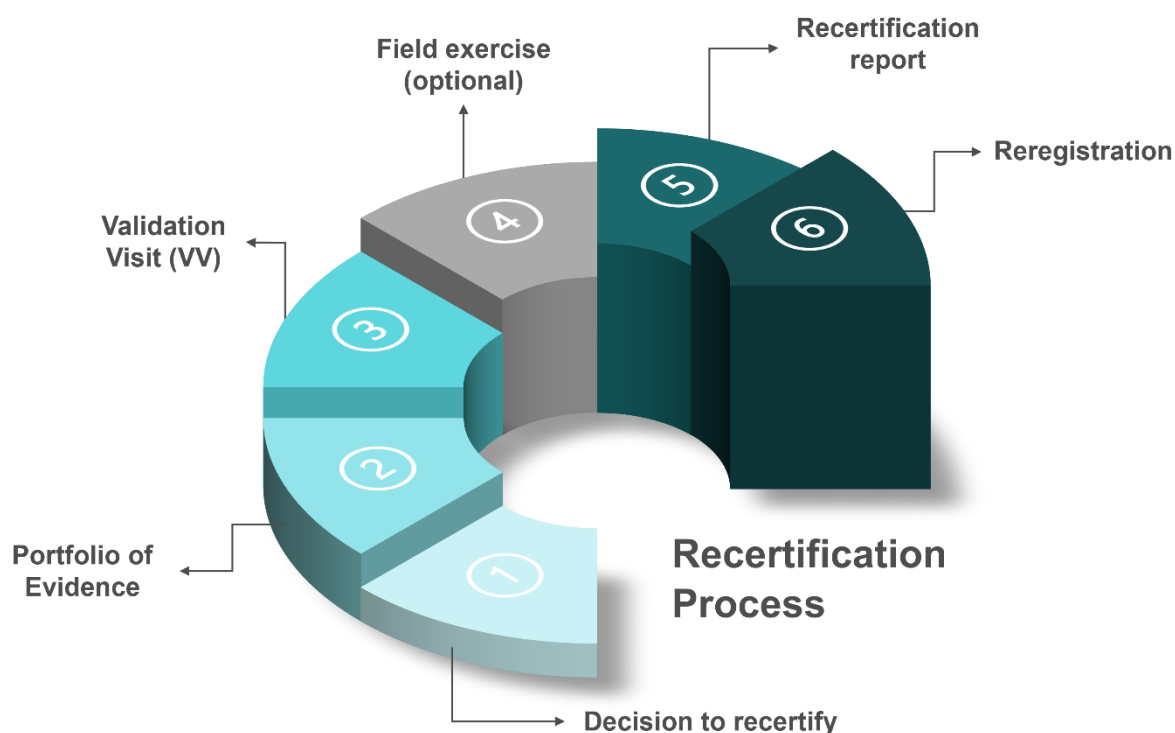
RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

The recertification process concerns modules, TAST and Other Response Capacities (ORCs) and consists of six steps, namely the decision to recertify, the application, the validation visit (VV), an optional field exercise, the recertification report and the final reregistration as shown in Figure 1.

The streamlined certification procedure³ for “twin capacities” also applies for their recertification process.

This recertification process does not apply to USAR teams and EMTs, which are required to comply with the classification and reclassification procedures established by INSARAG and WHO.

Figure 1. Steps of the recertification process



The recertification process is generally completed within a 12-months period.

Step 1: Decision to recertify

The recertification process is launched by the Commission that notifies the Member State 12 to 18 months before the current certification expires. If deemed necessary, the Commission invites the Member State to a strategic discussion on keeping the capacity in the ECPP, taking into account the ECPP goals and gaps. Following this notification, the Member State shall formally inform the Commission of one of the following decisions:

1. The response capacity will remain in the ECPP and shall undergo recertification, or
2. The response capacity will be withdrawn from the ECPP once the certification expires, which implies not proceeding with its recertification.

In the former case, the Member State shall ensure that the response capacity’s commitment to the ECPP remains valid for at least one year following the recertification. If this condition is

³ “Two (or more) identical twin capacities can be all ECPP certified after one only participated in, and successfully completed, the full ECPP certification scheme”

not met, the Member State shall extend the response capacity's commitment to the ECPP before the recertification process is initiated.

Step 2: Submission of Portfolio of Evidence

The Member State submits a Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) which consists of:

- 1) The completed Self-Assessment Checklist (Annex I)
- 2) Updated SOP including all relevant annexes/templates
- 3) An updated factsheet
- 4) Exercise reports, including key findings, areas for improvement, lessons identified, and best practices.
- 5) Mission reports of domestic and international deployments, including key findings, areas for improvement, lessons identified, and best practices.
- 6) Documentation of training courses attended by the capacity's personnel (e.g. national training programmes and/or agendas of trainings), specifically indicating participation in UCPM training courses.
- 7) List/description of new equipment and its usage in missions or exercises.
- 8) If applicable, documentation of new methodologies and procedures, e.g. communication and alerting tools, innovative procedures, new technologies etc.

The Portfolio of Evidence shall be submitted in English and may be complemented by photos to illustrate the results, including EU visibility (if applicable). The Commission may request additional information if needed.

The PoE must be submitted to the ECPP functional mailbox: ECHO-EUROPEAN-CIVIL-PROTECTION-POOL@ec.europa.eu not less than 3 months before the recertification due date.

Step 3: Validation visit (VV)

Once the Member State has submitted the PoE, the Commission assesses the information provided. The Commission organises a virtual VV with the Member State's Civil Protection authority to present and discuss its findings. The meeting also serves as an opportunity to clarify and/or obtain additional information.

Following the VV, the Commission decides to either recertify the response capacity immediately, or to recommend an additional field exercise to further evaluate the capacity. The additional field exercise is always requested if the capacity is not compliant with the first mandatory recertification criteria indicated above.

Step 4: Field exercise (Optional)

If the Commission concludes that an additional field exercise is needed, the Commission will assist and facilitate the registration of the response capacity in a suitable MODEX field exercise or full-scale exercise at the earliest opportunity. A recertification team is mobilised, consisting of at least one Commission representative and a peer certifier. The certification assessment tool

is used during the field exercise to assess the performance of the response capacity. The capacity's training objectives should reflect recommendations made in the certification report.

After the field exercise, the Commission shares its conclusions in a virtual VV.

If the certification has expired, and the capacity is not yet recertified, the capacity cannot be deployed as an ECPP capacity until its recertification. The capacity's status in CECIS is changed accordingly.

Step 5: Recertification report

Upon successful completion of the recertification process, the Commission issues a recertification report. The report summarizes key findings from the VV and, where applicable, from the additional field exercise. It may also include recommendations for the continued development of the capacity.

The Commission sends the final report and the ECPP certificate to the offering Member States' Civil Protection authority, confirming the successful completion of the recertification process.

If a capacity does not sufficiently meet the recertification criteria, reiterations may be conducted to grant more time for necessary investments in accordance with the ECPP quality requirements. The Commission may suspend the recertification process, and consequently, the capacity's ECPP membership. In such cases, the capacity may be required to follow the procedures outlined in the '[certification and registration guidelines](#)' to be reregistered in CECIS as part of the ECPP.

Step 6: Reregistration

After issuing the final recertification report and the certificate, the Commission adjusts the certification end date and confirms the ECPP operational commitment in CECIS. National civil protection authorities are responsible for keeping the capacity's information up to date in CECIS, particularly its factsheet.

ANNEX I: SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

The following self-assessment checklist should be submitted as part of the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) when a capacity is applying to be recertified in the ECCP. In the column ‘Self-Assessment’, the national authorities shall elaborate/describe how the capacity fulfils these criteria. The column “Supporting evidence” shall indicate the relevant documents provided.

Recertification Criteria	Self-Assessment	Supporting Evidence
	<i>Please answer with Yes/No and a short explanation.</i>	<i>Please provide the documentation specified below, referencing the corresponding part of the PoE.</i>
Exercises, deployments and trainings		
1. Has the team participated in an international field exercise (MODEX, full-scale, other international field exercise) or has it been deployed internationally in an UCPM response operation in the three-year period preceding the recertification due date?		List of international exercises with relevant documents, such as reports including key findings, areas for improvement, lessons identified, and best practices, photos and trainer’s feedback (if applicable).
2. Was the team deployed in national emergency response operations?		Documentation of national deployments with relevant documents such as mission reports including key findings, areas for improvement, lessons identified, best practices and photos.
3. Has the team engaged in national exercises?		List of national exercises the team engaged in, with relevant documents such as reports including key findings, areas for improvement, lessons identified, and best practices, photos and trainer’s feedback.
4. Has the team invested in the training of management personnel and team members?		Detailed records of training courses completed by key management staff and team members over the past five years (e.g. UCPM, UN, other). Courses attended by team members should correspond to their respective roles within the team.

Follow-up of recommendations from the certification process		
5. Has the team addressed the issues identified as ‘areas for improvement / recommendations’ in the final certification report?		Documentation to verify how the team has addressed the areas for improvements highlighted in the final certification or last recertification report (e.g.; reports, photos, SOPs in line with recommendations, updated factsheet, etc.).
6. Has the team maintained or enhanced its capacity by introducing new equipment, methods, innovations and other relevant improvements?		Documentation of newly introduced items (e.g. equipment, package solutions, communication methods, trainings, etc.) and a description of how these have contributed to the capacity’s development.
7. Have there been any changes in team’s composition, structure, procedures, etc., since the initial certification that improved the team’s performance?		Documentation demonstrating how changes in the team’s composition, structure, procedures etc., have been addressed (e.g.; any changes in the team roster should be followed by appropriate training for the new staff; changes in procedures should be reflected in SOPs; changes in ECPP focal points should be indicated).