



Guidelines for STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP) of European Civil Protection Pool (ECPP) response capacities for international response operations under the UCPM

Purpose

- i. The main purpose of these guidelines is to offer guidance on how to draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for ECPP response capacities, in the form of an annotated table of content.
- ii. Where required, the structure and content of the SOP can be adapted, depending on the specificities of the ECPP capacity.
- iii. The guidelines are applicable to the following ECPP response capacities: modules, Other Response Capacities (ORCs), Technical Assistance and Support Teams (TAST).
- iv. The SOP describe all necessary procedures to be followed by the capacity's personnel during the whole international deployment cycle of the response capacity. The SOP also serve the purpose of introducing the capacity to external readers, including ECPP certifiers.
- v. The focus of these SOP is on the management of the ECPP response capacity in international



response operations under the UCPM, and more specifically on preparedness, coordination, interoperability and self-sufficiency arrangements and procedures. The SOP do not cover the detailed technical aspects of operating the equipment.

- vi. An English version of the SOP should be provided to the Commission.
- vii. The SOP should be dated, versioned and endorsed at management level.

How to use these guidelines

Under each chapter, you will find a short description of the expected content, written in *italics*. It is recommended to follow the suggested structure and content, while adaptations are possible, when needed.

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ANNOTATED CONTENT

1. Introduction

- *Short and brief presentation of the SOP, including their scope and validity period.*
- *Short description of the purpose, aim and objectives of the response capacity.*
- *History of the capacity and the partners involved, and their respective roles.*
- *Decision-making system for the deployment, the financial and administrative arrangements in place for the deployment and long-term financial sustainability of the capacity.*
- *Project management arrangements for its continuous development.*
- *The module factsheet should be created [in CECIS 2.0 / from the Word template] and a pdf version attached (in Annex).*

2. Personnel

Brief overview of all functions and their descriptions, which should cover the following elements, as applicable:

- *Aspects of management, operations, logistics, medical support, administration and communication.*
- *Rosters of management and technical personnel, roster size and roster management system, including pre-arranged agreements with experts, criteria applied to become part of the roster and measures taken to ensure gender balance.*
- *Personnel structure, including the command structure. A graphical approach for visualizing the structure, e.g. a tree diagram or a flow chart, is recommended.*
- *List of training courses, qualifications, certifications, which are required for the various positions in the capacity.*

3. Equipment

Overview of the equipment used by the response capacity during all phases of the response operation. It should include:

- *All necessary information required for transportation – considering all different modes of transport –, such as weight, dimensions, volume, floor space, presence of hazardous materials, and any special requirements (e.g. sanitary, legal, or technical).*
- *Specifications on where to find the technical handbook(s) or manual(s).*
- *Equipment list.*



4. Communication

Description of communication lines including email addresses, phone numbers, call signs and a list of all communication equipment (service mobile phones, PCs, radios, sat phones, etc).

5. Safety and security

- *Procedures and tools to ensure safety and security of the personnel and equipment throughout the response phase.*
- *List all predictable major threats, contingency, evacuation and emergency communication plans.*

6. Code of conduct

It is recommended to use the Code of Conduct exactly as attached to this document and include explanation on how it is enforced. The Code of Conduct can be possibly complemented by internal codes and rules that the capacity's organization(s) already has/have in place.

7. Preparedness

7.1. Training and exercises

- *Types and levels of national and international training required for each team management function during international deployments (team leader, deputy team leader, etc.). Brief description of the training curricula. It should highlight how Safety and Security (S&S) issues are addressed.*
- *Description of how the capacity supports the development of its personnel's language skills.*
- *Explanation of how cross cutting issues – such as ethics, cultural awareness, gender, vulnerabilities, humanitarian principles, and cooperation between civil protection and humanitarian assistance – are incorporated into the training of personnel.*
- *Exercise programme of the response capacity, including procedures for testing, activation, periodicity and frequency of such exercises.*
- *NB: A training file for capacity members, covering national, UCPM, S&S, and other international training, including English language skills, should be maintained and regularly updated.*

7.2. Maintenance of equipment

Procedures and financial arrangements for storing and maintaining the capacity's equipment, including replacement of damaged or donated equipment.



7.3. Administrative issues (health, insurance, contracts, passport, etc)

- *Staff preparedness arrangements, such as medical preparedness (vaccinations, routine medical check-ups and medical checks before departure, physical and psychological tests, etc.), insurance for staff and equipment, and procedure for monitoring passport validity and obtaining visas.*
- *List of all predictable on-site expenses that may arise during a response operation, how these are covered, and which team member is in charge of handling them.*

7.4. Transport and border crossing planning

Transport arrangements, point(s) of departure, procedures for handling customs formalities, tax exemptions and donations, and special procedures for hazardous materials or equipment subject to restrictions during cross-border operations.

8. Deployment and operations

a. Alerting

- *Operational procedures for alerting, describing communication lines, responsibilities and tasks between relevant authorities. It is recommended to present the alerting structures in a flow chart.*
- *Checklist for personnel readiness before mission (including grab bag) in Annex.*
- *Equipment check procedure*
- *Affected country information (template in annex)*
- *NB: for each type of modules, the UCPM legislation defines the maximum number of hours to establish readiness for departure after acceptance of the offer (see Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/704, Annex II).*

b. Pre-deployment phase

Description of applicable procedures, visualized in a flowchart.

8.1. Deployment phase



- *Description of all the necessary procedures with a special focus on transport planning and preparation.*
- *Tasks of each team member during deployment.*
- *List of documents to be prepared and to be handed to EUCPT/LEMA(RDC)/OSOCC when the capacity arrives on site, such as the module's factsheet, description of tasks of personnel, team members' contact list (including passport, visa, international driving license, vaccination, emergency contact etc.) and structure of the module.*

8.2. Operational phase

i. Setting-up the capacity

- *Procedures for installing the capacity in the field are described, such as the first assessment, setting up the Base of Operations (BoO) - if necessary - up to technical start-up procedures and security issues.*
- *Description of aspects to ensure the capacity's self-sufficiency:*
 - *Shelter / accommodation.*
 - *Fuel, power generation and lighting.*
 - *Sanitation and hygiene.*
 - *Food and water supply.*
 - *Medical or paramedical staff, facilities and supplies.*
 - *Storage and maintenance of equipment.*
 - *Equipment for communication.*
 - *Local transportation.*
 - *Logistical support, equipment and staff to set-up a BoO without delay upon arrival on site.*
- *A checklist for establishing a BoO including S&S, camp management, waste management, WASH, food, lighting.*
- *Sketch of planned BoO lay-out (including dirty and clean areas)*
- *Team member(s) in charge of drafting the Plan of action (PoA), and how it will be used - template in Annex*

ii. Operating the module

Under this item, all necessary courses of action should be laid out, with a focus on coordination and interoperability:

- *Personnel accountability procedure.*
- *Information management plan.*
- *Media plan (e.g. information material, key messages).*



- *S&S procedures (including allocation of tasks and arrangements for critical incidents) - S&S plan template in annex.*
- *Evacuation plan (including medical evacuation plan).*
- *Daily situation report template (in Annex).*
- *Log-book template (in Annex).*

8.3. On-site command, control and coordination structure

In disaster response, various command, control and coordination structures can be established, depending on the severity of the disaster, national emergency management structure of the affected country and its capacity to cope with emergency management.

This chapter aims to describe, in a simplified way, the most important parts of the command, control and coordination structure at the operational level during operations in EU and non- EU countries.

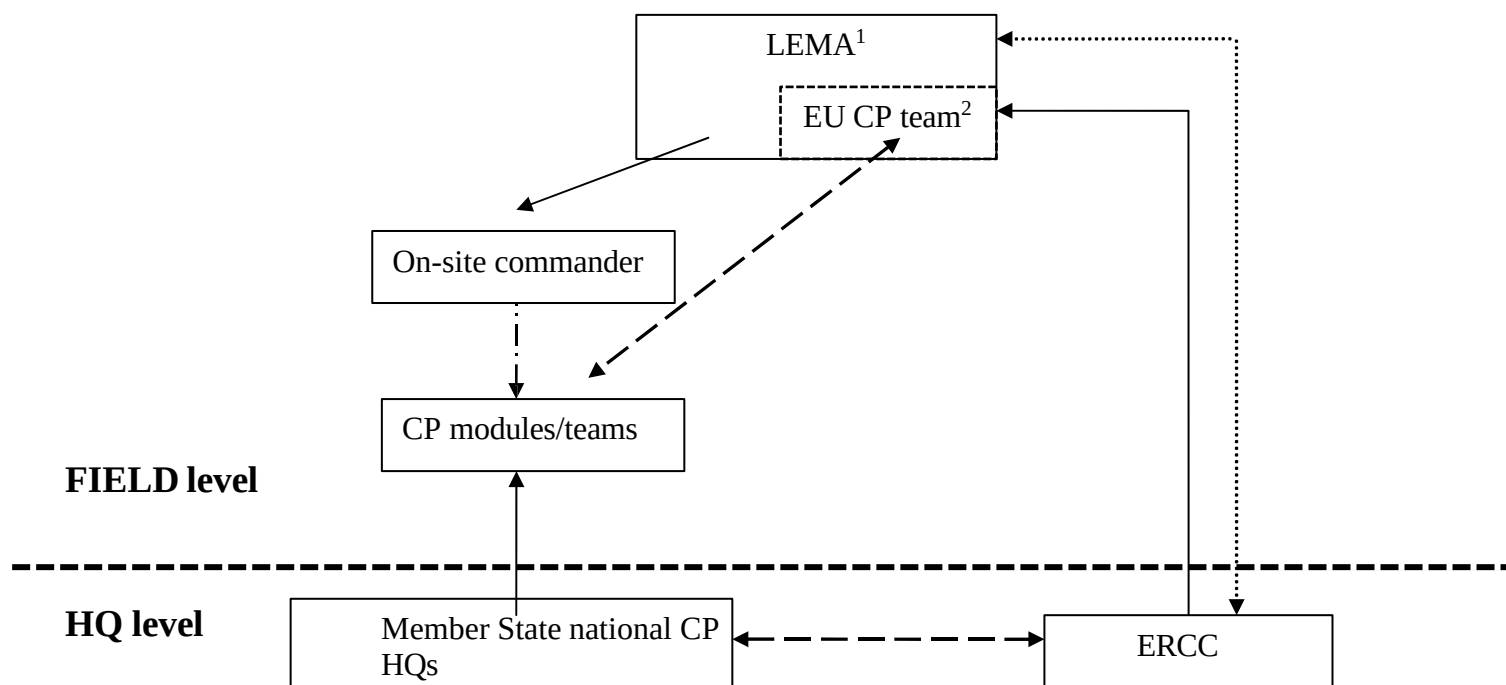
i. Inside the EU

In disaster response inside the EU, the command, control and coordination structure is established by the affected country, unless the national emergency management structure is seriously disrupted by the disaster and the affected country requests assistance in this regard.

The diagram below describes the command, control and coordination structure between the main players at the operational level, i.e. the civil protection (CP) modules/teams deployed by the sending country/ies to assist the affected country and the on- site commander established by the Local Emergency Management Authority (LEMA).

How and to what extent the EU CP team is incorporated into the LEMA structure is subject to a discussion and agreement between the ERCC and LEMA prior to the EUCP team's deployment. The set up can be finalized after the arrival of the EUCP team on site, according to the operational situation and needs.

During the operation, the on-site commander maintains operational control of modules/teams deployed on his/her territory of responsibility until the response operation is completed or interrupted.



¹ national or regional level

² if deployed



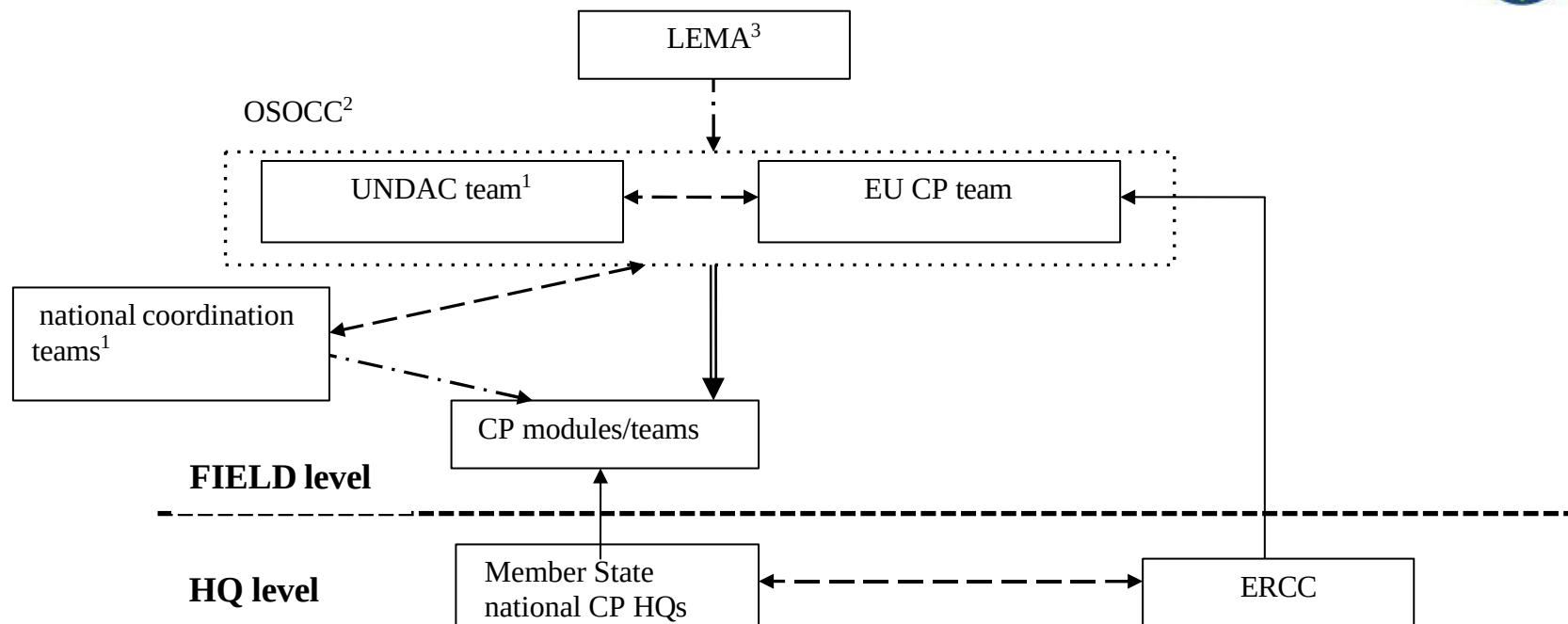
ii. Outside the EU

The diagram below describes the basic command, control and coordination structure during operation in non-EU countries.

In disaster response operations outside the EU, the command, control and coordination structure is established by the affected country and/or UN OCHA – UNDAC team if requested by the affected country. In the latter case, the EU CP team may be fully or partially integrated into the OSOCC structure formed by the UNDAC team, depending on an agreement between UN OCHA and ERCC prior to the EU CP team's deployment.

The diagram also shows the potential positioning of national coordination teams that a sending country may dispatch, for example in case of deployment of a large number of CP modules/teams. In case the national coordination teams are not present, the operational control is executed directly by the OSOCC.

N.B. "Operational control" in the context of this SOP manual covers the communication at the field/operational level between the on-site commander and CP modules/teams, particularly to assign, clarify and co-ordinate tasks and the areas of operation of response teams. "Strategic control" in the context of this SOP manual covers the communication between the modules/teams and their national HQs.



operational control - . - . - . →

operational control when national coordination teams are not present ==>

strategic control ———→

coordination < - - - - - >

¹ if present

² if established

³ national or regional level



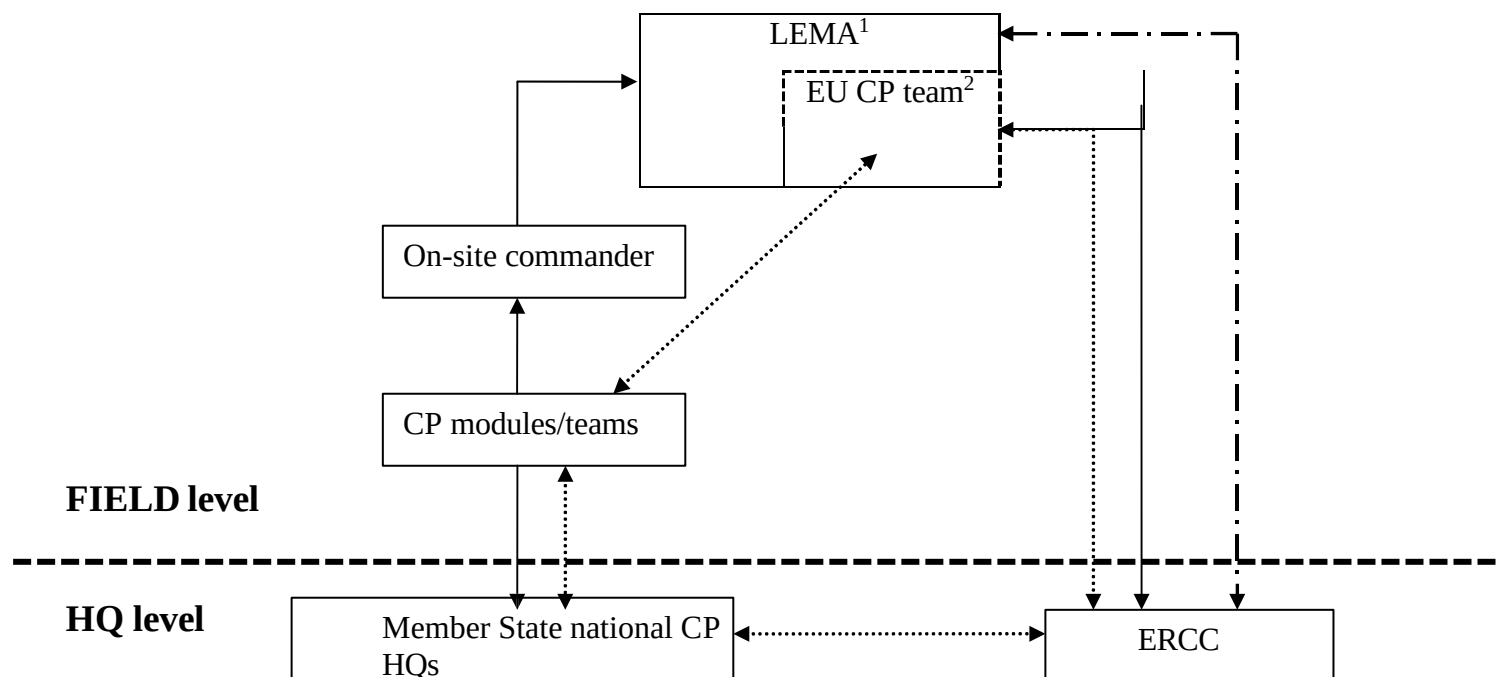
8.4. Reporting/information exchange

Lines of reporting and exchange of information and reports among the main players at the operational level during operations in EU and non-EU countries.

The team leaders of the ECPP capacities should report during the on-site operation to the on-site commander at a minimum on a daily basis, at a time he/she decides, and inform the EU CP team (if deployed) or the ERCC LO about their activities at a minimum on a daily basis at a time agreed between the EUCPT (or the ERCC LO) and the ECPP capacities, reflecting the operational needs and time zone of the operation location.



i. Inside the EU



exchange of information, messages and reports>

reporting —————>

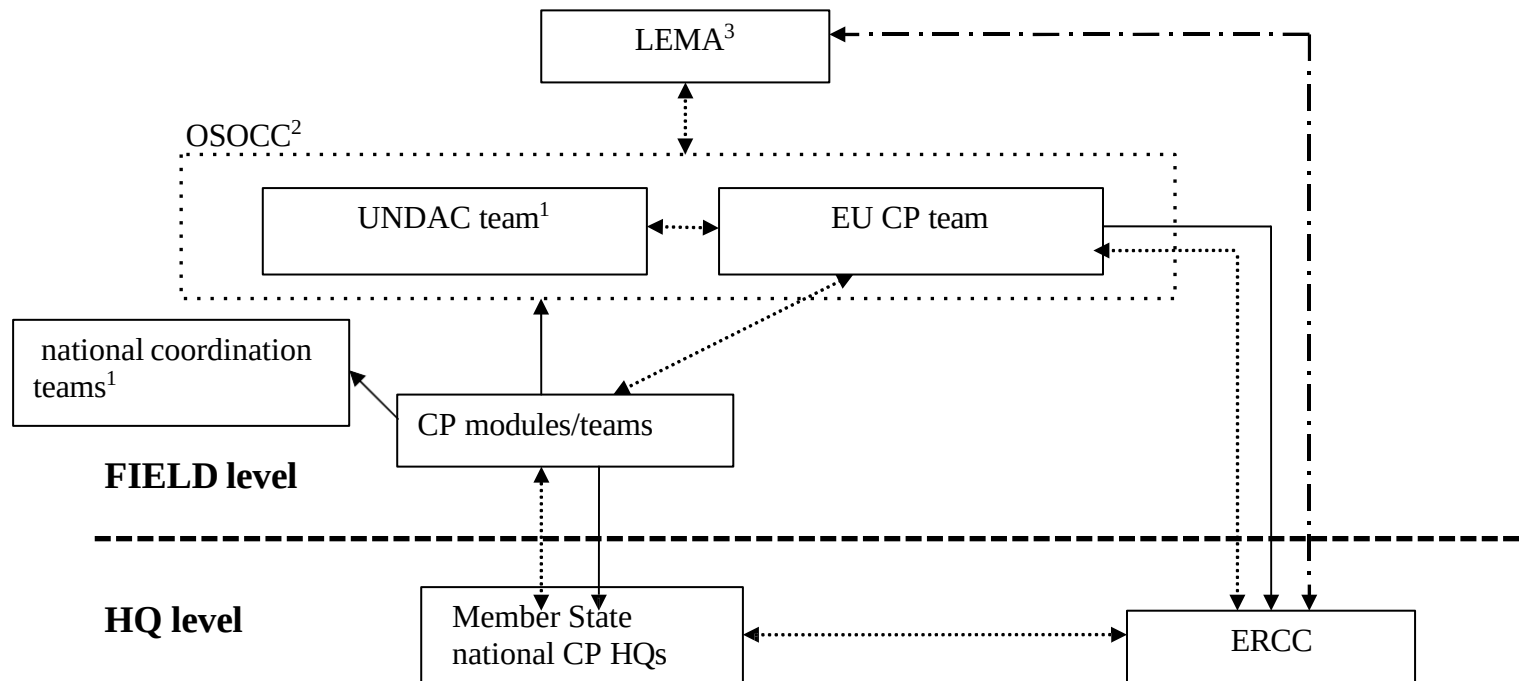
exchange of information, messages and reports when EU CP team is not deployed - . - . - .>

¹ national or regional level

² if deployed



ii. Outside the EU



reporting —————>

exchange of information, messages and reports>

exchange of information, messages and reports when EU CP team is not deployed <----->

¹ if deployed

² if established

³ national or regional level



8.5. Local staff

- *Procedure for temporarily hiring local staff.*
- *Template of contract form (in annex) and information about legal rules and requirements. Questions of liability, insurance etc. should be clarified.*

8.6. End of mission

- *All necessary steps at the end of the mission (if possible, presented in a checklist or flowchart).*
- *Demobilisation plan.*
- *End of mission report template in annex.*

8.7. Handover

- *This part should cover all potential handover situations, such as handover to an incoming response team, local authorities, UN and/or donation to a local organization. Checklists for all these situations in annex. Part of the handover should be a logbook with a record of important positive and negative events that occurred during the operations. It should not only help to deliver information about the equipment left behind (if applicable), but also to inform the incoming team of the prevailing conditions on-site.*
- *Donation procedures and donation certificates for the donation of the equipment e.g. to another organization, should be provided in annex.*
- *Handover and donation templates in annex.*

8.8. After-deployment

- *Describe the steps to be taken right upon return from a deployment, both for the personnel and the equipment.*
- *For the personnel, standard post-deployment actions include debriefing, medical checks, psycho-sociologic support, etc.*
- *Post-mission plan, including team debriefing.*

9. Additional issues

Any additional issues not covered by any of the previous chapters should be mentioned here, e.g. any special or own terms of the deploying organization, etc.

Annexes

As mentioned above.

Introduction

The code of conduct applies to all members of the [XXX (add name of your module)] module.

This code presents guidelines for staff conduct, which are intended to be consistent with the specific national standards of conduct.

Ethical conduct is not a passive process but requires you to make conscious choices and decisions, and to exercise good judgment.

As a member of the [XXX module], you are expected to observe the highest standards of ethical conduct, consistent with the values of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, integrity and discretion.

You should strive to avoid even the appearance of impropriety in your conduct.

Basic Standards of the Code

Humanity

All people shall be treated humanely in all circumstances by saving lives and alleviating suffering, while ensuring respect for the individual.

Impartiality

You are expected to act with impartiality.

Assistance is to be provided regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind.

You should take care that your expression of personal views and convictions do not compromise or appear to compromise the performance of your official duties. Your official conduct must at all times be characterized by objectivity and professionalism. You should not allow personal relationships or considerations, including bias or favouritism, to influence the performance of your official duties.

Neutrality

You should not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Integrity

You are expected to act with integrity in all your activities, avoiding any behaviour that would reflect adversely on you or on your country or on the EU as whole. Integrity encompasses honesty, probity, and loyalty.

Discretion

You should exercise the utmost discretion in your actions and show tact and reserve in your pronouncements in a manner that is consistent with your status as an international relief worker.

Courtesy and respect

You should treat all your partners with courtesy and respect, without harassment, or physical or verbal abuse. You should at all times avoid behaviour at the workplace that, although not rising to the level of harassment or abuse, may nonetheless create an atmosphere of hostility or intimidation.

You should respect religion, culture and custom of other persons.

You should respect national and international law.

Accountability

You should act within the scope of your authority at all times. You remain accountable for tasks you perform or delegate to others.

Use and disclosure of confidential information

You are responsible to protect the security of any confidential/sensitive information provided to you.

Press relations, public statements and publications

You should fully respect relevant national or European Commission's (EC), when deployed under the European Commission's contract, rules for contacts with news and media.

When deployed under the EC contract, the EC owns the copyright for all written, photographic and other material you produce as part of your official duties, and has the right to publish such work in a manner it deems appropriate.

Conflicts of interest

You should avoid any situation involving a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict, between your personal interests and performance of your official duties.

Acceptance of gifts, decorations and honours during deployment

You should never solicit gifts or favours in connection with your duties. Gifts that are offered should normally be declined. However, you may accept a small gift when it would create an embarrassment to refuse it.

You are not allowed to accept any honours or decorations given to you in connection with your official duties. However, if there is no advance notice of the honour or decoration, and it is impossible to refuse it, then you may accept it and then report it to your respective headquarters.