

# Stall safety

The International  
Federation's guide to  
a safer mission



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

# The International Federation's Global Agenda (2006–2010)

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Over the next years, the collective focus of the Federation will be on achieving the following goals and priorities:

## Our goals

**Goal 1:** Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.

**Goal 2:** Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.

**Goal 3:** Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.

**Goal 4:** Promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion.

## Our priorities

Improving our local, regional and international capacity to respond to disasters and public health emergencies.

Scaling up our actions with vulnerable communities in health promotion, disease prevention and disaster risk reduction.

Increasing significantly our HIV/AIDS programming and advocacy.

Renewing our advocacy on priority humanitarian issues, especially fighting intolerance, stigma and discrimination, and promoting disaster risk reduction.

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AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

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**NEW ZEALAND RED CROSS**

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International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

P.O. Box 372  
CH-1211 Geneva 19  
Switzerland  
Telephone: +41 22 730 4222  
Telefax: +41 22 733 0395  
E-mail: [secretariat@ifrc.org](mailto:secretariat@ifrc.org)  
Web site: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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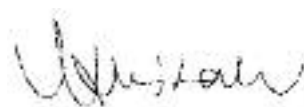
This security guide was prepared and written by Lars Tangen, John Dyer and Karl Julisson from the security unit of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. We would like to extend our appreciation to the publication team of the International Federation secretariat for their efforts on the layout as well as for organise all the additional work to make this book happen.

# Foreword

The International Federation finds itself working increasingly in natural disasters and in areas with complex political and social circumstances that change rapidly and can have an impact on its humanitarian operations. As security risks are generally higher for those based in the field, promoting basic security awareness is important to ensure the safety and well-being of all Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel, whether they are Federation-employed delegates, staff-on-loan, local staff during working hours, volunteers working with the International Federation, visitors, consultants or family members accompanying delegates.

Although the degree of risk varies from country to country, it is important to understand that security incidents can occur in *all* operational areas. Worryingly, a rising number and range of threats are being faced every day by humanitarian workers throughout the world, increasing their personal vulnerability. In order to fulfil their humanitarian mission, Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel must *always* follow basic security rules and act appropriately in any given situation.

Understanding the different types of security situation you may face in the field and how to behave in order to minimize risks to your safety and that of your fellow colleagues is vital to staying safe in the field. Aimed at Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel, *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide to a safer mission*, together with the accompanying publication, *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers*, provide the necessary tools to implement and maintain a well-functioning security framework, adapted to the specific context, in each of the International Federation's operational areas around the world.



Markku Niskala  
*Secretary General*

# Introduction

Security starts with the individual. In order to achieve maximum security and safety, delegates and staff have to maintain a certain level of security awareness.

Basic security awareness includes the measures we take or use automatically to protect ourselves as we go about our daily business, such as wearing seat belts, life jackets, locking our doors, etc. When out on mission, the threat picture changes for most of us and you may have to adapt to an environment with new threats such as mines, guns, checkpoints, wildlife and natural hazards. You must now regularly review what are considered to be threats to your security and adapt quickly to the new situation.

Basic security awareness also means anticipating problems and avoiding them. This means you have to identify any risks that can hurt you or your colleagues, or that can affect resources on the ground, hampering your work to give assistance to the beneficiaries – the whole reason you are there.

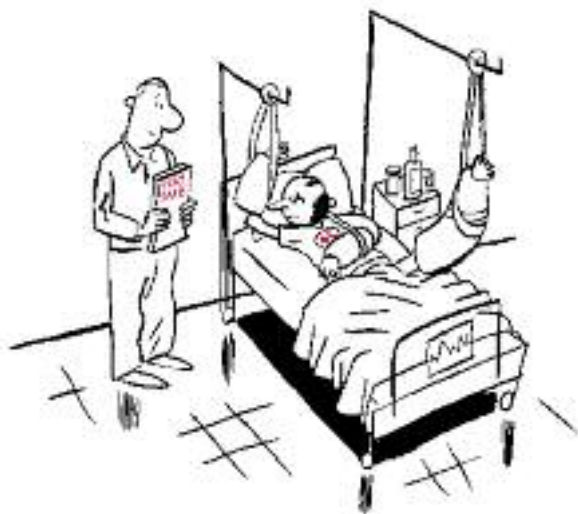
The security unit has written this manual with the aim of providing maximum usefulness and easy reference. As such, the manual – complete with annexes and supporting documents available from FedNet and the security unit – should provide you with a useful and effective toolkit enabling you to operate safely in the field.

Keep it within easy reach – and stay safe.

If you have any questions, comments or issues, do not hesitate to contact us in the security unit at [security.unit@ifrc.org](mailto:security.unit@ifrc.org).

The security unit can be reached 24 hours a day, seven days a week, on the following numbers:

- Lars Tangen (Manager) – Mobile: +41 79 217 3371
- John Dyer (Security Coordinator) – Mobile: +41 79 251 8015
- Karl Julisson (Security Coordinator) – Mobile: +41 79 308 9842



## Security layers

The International Federation's layered security framework recognizes that security must be addressed in a multi-dimensional manner. It is not sufficient for the International Federation to focus on security at a high level if security measures are not implemented at a regional or country (operational) level; and, equally, if individuals do not then take appropriate steps for their own security. Similarly, security will be compromised if individuals implement effective security measures at a lower level while not implementing them at a higher, country, or headquarters level.

At a strategic level, the International Federation and its member National Societies are responsible for ensuring that effective procedures are in place to protect and reinforce the image of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. They achieve this by ensuring that they operate within the boundaries of the Fundamental Principles<sup>1</sup> and the Code of Conduct<sup>2</sup>, and that they have effective policies and procedures in place to guide field operations. As employers, the International Federation and National Societies are also responsible for en-

1. The seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

2. The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief can be found at [www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct](http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct).

## Federation security framework

### Strategic

- » fundamental principles
- » code of conduct (organizational)
- » security policy and strategy
- » active field support on a 24-hour/7-day basis
- » recruitment/training
- » inter-agency cooperation

### Operational level

- » sound security plan
- » adequate security management
- » external relations/ information
- » institutional conduct/integrity



### Individual level

- » personal conduct (personnel)
- » competence
- » basic security awareness
- » compliance with security regulations

sure that they have effective recruitment, training and management processes in place to ensure that personnel are capable of undertaking the roles demanded of them.

Effective security is also dependent on ensuring that the image and reputation of the Movement is maintained at an operational level<sup>3</sup>. Senior regional, country and sub-delegation management are responsible for ensuring that effective security planning is conducted and that sound security management structures are established. The successful implementation of these plans will also be dependent on effective situational monitoring and maintaining working relations with other organizations and key players present in the operational area.

<sup>3</sup>. All areas where Red Cross or Red Crescent personnel are present.

It is expected that, as individuals, you will undertake your duties in a competent manner and be respected for the work you do. You are responsible for ensuring that you understand your responsibilities within the operation. You must also have a clear understanding of security plans and comply with security procedures. As field operators on the ground, you are also closest and should be most attuned to the environment around you. Not only must you therefore maintain an awareness of this environment, but you must also report any changes you observe to allow plans to be amended if required.

With this model of security it is apparent that the layers are mutually supporting and therefore, at each level, security responsibilities must be implemented. Overall security will be diminished if any of the layers are weak.

## Minimum security requirements

In order to enable the International Federation's security framework to be implemented, a set of minimum security requirements (MSRs) has been established. Minimum security requirements outline the minimum criteria and procedures required to ensure that the organization is fulfilling its responsibilities to create a maximally safe operational environment, while at the same time enabling its humanitarian mandate to be achieved. The International Federation's MSRs cover the following areas and are detailed in Annex A:

- » personal conduct
- » training and preparation
- » security management
- » regulations and contingency planning
- » security phases
- » critical incident management
- » field movement control
- » finance

## The seven pillars of security

The International Federation's security in the field – both at the institutional and personal level – is underpinned by seven key principles known as the seven pillars of security. The first two are especially relevant to the Red Cross and Red Crescent as they deal with political and operational acceptance, the dissemination of the fundamental principles of the Movement, and the emblem and notification of authorities. The rest are applicable to any organization or multina-

tional corporation aiming to protect its staff. How these seven pillars are used in practice and how much weight we give each pillar depends on the prevailing security situation and the level of risk involved.

The seven pillars are:

## The seven pillars of security



- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Acceptance     | 5. Behaviour     |
| 2. Identification | 6. Communication |
| 3. Information    | 7. Protection    |
| 4. Regulations    |                  |

### 1. Acceptance

This pillar highlights the need to be politically, operationally and culturally accepted as a neutral, impartial and humanitarian actor by all parties. Accept-

### How this pillar applies to you personally

- Accept that you are deployed to locations where the culture and working environment are different to your own or what you are used to.
- Accept the new culture, learn to understand the local system of values, customs, laws and dos and don'ts, and act in a manner consistent with them.
- Accept the possibility of working in an insecure environment.

ance of the Movement's presence within the area of operations is paramount in order for it to be able to operate. The International Federation establishes a presence only with the agreement of the host National Society. Acceptance must also be on an individual level, where Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel accept that they will work according to our principles, the code of conduct, and our rules and regulations.

## 2. Identification

The Red Cross and Red Crescent must be identifiable and relies mainly on its emblems to achieve this. Therefore, all premises and vehicles must be clearly identified with the International Federation's logo. The International Federation and its members must also distinguish themselves from other humanitarian players present in the area and have a clearly identifiable operational profile.

### How this pillar applies to you personally

- Identify yourself by wearing your Red Cross and Red Crescent badge and carrying your identification card at all times.
- Announce in advance all travel and movements – particularly into security-sensitive areas – to all parties concerned.
- Travel in vehicles marked with the red cross or red crescent.
- Ensure that Red Cross and Red Crescent premises, including offices and warehouses, are clearly marked as such.

## 3. Information

Information must be up to date and effective mechanisms should be established to pass on information, especially anything that could have an impact on security. All staff should acquire the conditioned reflex of collecting and passing on as much information as possible on security matters. Sensitive information about the military, and political, religious or related issues should not be discussed openly

### How this pillar applies to you personally

- Inform yourself about the area you are working in and monitor political, social and economic events and natural hazards in the country and wider region.
- Remember you are responsible for updating yourself about the security situation.
- Collect and share all available information about security within your team and report any security incidents to your manager.

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or transmitted over the radio, telephone or fax. Any security incidents must be reported, mapped and analysed, with appropriate action taken to address any deficiencies identified. Maintaining good relations with the media is important, but any discussions with them – either formal or informal – should be limited to operational issues.

#### 4. Regulations

Regulations are mandatory and must be established to mitigate risks and threats, and to establish a secure working and living environment. They must be specific to each delegation and the area in which it is operating. Security regulations are applicable to all delegates, local staff, dependants and visitors, while the country or regional representative is responsible for ensuring compliance. A copy of each delegation's security rules should be sent to the security unit at the Federation secretariat in Geneva and should be updated after a critical incident or any deterioration in the security situation. Emergency contingency plans and procedures, including medical evacuation and relocation plans, must also be developed and be well understood by all staff. A deliberate breach or ignorance of the rules is considered gross misconduct and, depending on the circumstances, can result in an early termination of mission. The security rules are also applicable to all staff of National Societies working in the country bilaterally under the International Federation's security umbrella.

#### How this pillar applies to you personally

- Follow the security rules and regulations established for your delegation.
- Adhere to travel procedures, driving rules, movement restrictions and curfews.
- Maintain awareness of contingency plans and procedures established for emergency situations, medical evacuation and relocation.

#### 5. Behaviour

Safety in the field depends to a large extent on the personal attributes of individuals, particularly solidarity with team members and correct behaviour. Individuals should know their strengths and weaknesses and never provoke a situation with offensive personal behaviour. They should always maintain integrity and not become part of the problem in the community. Physical and psychological well-being is also important. Correct, polite, impartial and neutral behaviour by delegates and staff is the golden rule.

## How this pillar applies to you personally

- Behave honestly and show self-discipline and respect for the local culture including its habits, dress code and other sensitivities.
- Remember you are representing the Red Cross or Red Crescent 24 hours a day and seven days a week, so your behaviour reflects the Movement as a whole and may impact on the security of your colleagues.
- Keep a low personal profile to make yourself a less attractive target of crime and always be aware of your surroundings and neighbourhood.
- Maintain your physical and psychological well-being and ask for assistance if you need it.
- Report all security-related observations to your manager.

## 6. Communication

Having a reliable and independent communications system is indispensable for maintaining security. Effective communications networks must be established in order to: monitor and check movements of staff; provide information on the situation in the area of operation; and, deal with any crisis that may arise. All personnel must be familiar with communications equipment and the established procedures for its use. Radio and other equipment as such will not increase an individual's security: only the proper use of it will.

## How this pillar applies to you personally

- Observe security rules about communicating your whereabouts.
- Know how to use your communications equipment and check that it is working before any movements outside the base of operations.
- Comply with radio procedures and respect the use of emergency and operational channels. Always speak slowly and clearly when transmitting information.

## 7. Protection

Measures should be taken to ensure that the protection of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel and facilities are appropriate to the situation. These may include anything from the selection of secure residences and delegation offices with well-functioning communications possibilities, to the use of protective measures such as physical barriers, alarm systems and guards. Fire-safety procedures should be in place and emergency exits in residences and offices should be checked regularly for clear passage. All residences must be cleared by the International Feder-

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ation. Delegates should remember that they are responsible for all equipment that has been entrusted to them and protect it against damage or theft.

## How this pillar applies to you personally

- Familiarize yourself with your delegation's emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Be aware of all the protective measures in your operational area.

## Security strategies and plans

The International Federation's overall approach to security is one of prevention, relying on proactive rather than reactive measures. The aim of this approach is to create the safest operational environment that allows the International Federation to fulfil its humanitarian mandate, while maintaining the safety and well-being of its delegates, staff and volunteers. In order to succeed, this approach requires:

- a good security plan drawn up in accordance with the prevailing security situation
- high personal and institutional security awareness and active security management
- good external relations, networking and information gathering
- dissemination of our fundamental principles, the emblem and humanitarian mandate

### Security strategies

Three major ways to reduce risk



- » correct and impartial personal and institutional conduct
- » operational planning and constant monitoring of the situation

Risk reduction is key to this preventative approach. There are three common security strategies that are used to reduce the security risk: acceptance, protection and deterrence. Once you understand these strategies you can determine how each can be utilized to reduce risk in your particular situation and, therefore, how they will be reflected in your overall security plan.

### Acceptance

Reduces or removes the threat by gaining acceptance for our presence and work. This strategy is the one most preferred by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Adopting this strategy means:

- » You must have an active dissemination policy – who you are, what you are doing and plan to do in the future.
- » You must actively consult with the local community and adjust programmes as needed to ensure acceptance within the community.
- » You must continually monitor the local situation and understand the issues likely to cause problems with your acceptance.

#### In practice...

During the South Asia earthquake operation in 2005, many humanitarian organizations had difficulty conducting operations as they were accused of trying to subvert local women by employing them and indoctrinating them with Western values. The International Federation actively consulted local communities and developed programmes to target community-identified needs and ensured that all staff acted and dressed appropriately in line with local cultural norms. The International Federation experienced fewer difficulties and instances of harassment than a number of other organizations who were less sensitive to local beliefs.

### Protection

Reduces the risk by reducing vulnerability, not the threat, by using protective procedures and equipment to 'harden the target'.

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Adopting this strategy means:

- You must clearly identify what the physical threats to the organization are and where you are vulnerable.
- Taking steps to introduce measures that will reduce the identified vulnerability: improving physical security by employing guards, constructing perimeter walls and fences, installing bars on windows, better locks and alarms, etc.
- You must understand that if the action taken is disproportionate to the threat it can have the reverse effect and negatively affect your image and security.

### In practice...

A clearly identified risk in Nairobi, Kenya, is break-ins at residences, which often result in violence, including rape. Houses, therefore, have an additional steel-bar door that enables the living area to be sealed off from the rest of the house. This provides added protection against an identified threat.

In many areas, especially where there is a high crime rate – particularly for burglaries and theft – the International Federation employs security guards to restrict access as well as to guard its premises after work hours.

## Deterrence

Counter threats with legal, political or economic sanctions and/or armed actions that may have severe implications and impact on those presenting the threat.

Adopting this strategy means:

- You must understand that this strategy is very difficult for any humanitarian organization to implement as it may remove the humanitarian dimension and potentially reduce acceptance; the use of military escorts is

### In practice...

During the tsunami operations in the former conflict area of Banda Aceh province in Indonesia, two Participating National Societies were threatened by a small group of alleged rebels, demanding that a tax be paid to them to allow the societies to complete their programmes. In response, the operations were stopped and the local community was advised that, unless the threats ceased, the humanitarian programmes could not continue. The local community adopted an active policing role for these groups and the programmes continued successfully.

one deterrent strategy. However, there is very little a humanitarian organization can do in terms of deterrence except threaten to withdraw.

- » You must have an active dissemination policy explaining who you are, what you are doing and plan to do in the future, and what you need from the community to support you in this.

Some of the basic principles of security based on the strategies outlined here will be reinforced throughout this manual.

## Security plans

Security strategies are expressed through each delegation's individual security plan. A security plan, therefore, will not normally be a single document but will instead consist of a number of components, typically including:

- » security strategies
- » security regulations
- » contingency plans
- » operational security phases
- » security guidelines and advice
- » welcome pack
- » security briefings and debriefings
- » critical incident management plan

The security regulations that you will receive in the field and be required to follow are specific to the context and working environment of your assigned operation and location. They should be clear, functional and up to date.

The regulations will provide you with specific instructions about your behaviour regarding security and the procedures for certain specific emergency situations that your delegation may face. The topics covered in the regulations include, for example: general conduct, field movement, vehicle safety, what to do in the event of a medical emergency, communication procedures, contingency planning, incident reporting, office, residential and site security, as well as security when handling finances.

Compliance with security rules and regulations is mandatory for all personnel – including dependants – and any breach will be considered misconduct or gross misconduct. Disciplinary measures will be applied in cases where security rules and procedures are not followed.

## Contingency plans

Contingency planning is designed to ensure organizational readiness in anticipation of an emergency, and to enable the organization to react effectively in such situations. This readiness includes plans for the management of human and financial resources, emergency supplies, communications, etc.

Effective security management aims to anticipate and avoid risks. Contingency plans are components of the overall security planning process and outline pre-established protocols and procedures in response to a specific hazard situation or event.

The main types of contingency plan you will be involved in developing or implementing are relocation or medical evacuation plans. The development of medical evacuation plans is covered in Chapter 8, while more detailed guidance on contingency planning in general is provided in Chapter 3 of the accompanying publication, *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers*, entitled Security planning.

## Security phases

The International Federation operates a standard, four-phase security classification system across all field operations.

The classification of phase levels will be established by the country representative or manager in the field, and security planning will be undertaken in accordance with this level.

Declaration of the highest security level, the red phase, will be decided by the senior field manager following – if time permits – the authorization of the director of the coordination and programmes division, in consultation with the manager of the security unit in Geneva.

If orange and/or red phases have been implemented, the decision to return to a lower phase will be taken following consultation with the manager of the security unit in Geneva.

**White phase**

Situation is normal

No major security concerns

**Yellow phase**

Situation of heightened tension initiated

Some security concerns. Heightened security awareness

**Orange phase**

Emergency situation

Access to beneficiaries limited. Risk to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel severe, and tight security management needed

**Red phase**

Relocation or hibernation

Conditions do not allow work. Risk to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel extreme

## Roles and responsibilities regarding security

The following list of roles and responsibilities is not exhaustive.

### Roles and responsibilities of field managers (including FACT, ERU, RDRT)

- ✎ identifying and defining how different strategies will be implemented
- ✎ explicit responsibility for security management at the delegation; while they may be assisted by a focal point or security delegate, overall responsibility cannot be delegated
- ✎ implementation of the minimum security requirements by ensuring that all security regulations, emergency procedures and security management are adequate for the current situation and are implemented
- ✎ ensuring compliance with regulations
- ✎ leading by example with their own conduct and compliance

### Roles and responsibilities of delegates

- ✎ full understanding of and compliance with all applicable security rules and regulations, including emergency procedures
- ✎ taking care of personal security and maintaining a high level of security awareness

- taking all possible measures to minimize potential risks to both individual and collective security; always keeping your colleagues informed as to your actions can affect the security of others – even in ways that may not be obvious at the time
- ensuring the integrity of the International Federation 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and behaving correctly at all times in accordance with the Code of Conduct
- maintaining external relations and information networks with other organizations and institutional bodies on the ground
- knowledge of communications tools available in the delegation and their proper use



**Remember!** Although a manager has overall responsibility and decision-making authority regarding security, each team member – from the field to Federation secretariat level – has certain roles and responsibilities that they must adhere to. Unless everyone plays their part, the staff and delegation will be at greater risk of security incidents and of coming to harm.

## Information management

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As information is one of the seven pillars identified earlier, it must always be up to date and managers must establish effective mechanisms to ensure that key situational information is both gathered and passed on. All staff should acquire the conditioned reflex of collecting and passing on as much information as possible on security matters. Security incident reporting is a formal way of doing this, but staff should also informally report any concerns, or where they note possible changes to the normal situation. For example, a delegate reporting that when out among the local community the people did not seem as friendly as they were the previous week could indicate a possible shift in attitude and a lower level of acceptance.

## Briefings and debriefings

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Briefings and debriefings are very relevant to your safety and assist your managers in the field to manage information. On arrival at your post you should receive a briefing from your line manager, not only about the work you will be doing as part of the International Federation's operation, but also about security. In the event that you are involved in any incident, you should be debriefed immediately afterwards. You should also expect a debriefing session at the end of your

mission. It is important to be proactive about requesting a time if no arrangements have been made within a week of your arrival – and especially after any security incident.

## The red cross and red crescent emblems and the International Federation logo

The emblems are used in more than 190 countries in the world to protect medical personnel, buildings and equipment in times of armed conflict, and to identify National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Unfortunately, the emblems have sometimes been perceived as having religious, cultural or political connotations. This has had an effect on respect for the emblems, particularly in certain conflict situations, and has diminished the protection that the emblems offer to victims and to humanitarian and medical personnel.

The adoption of a third emblem in January 2007, the red crystal, was intended to improve protection for all those who need it, be they beneficiaries of humanitarian aid or persons striving to deliver it.

### Individual emblems

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- The red cross and red crescent emblems are universally recognized symbols of assistance for the victims of armed conflict and natural disasters.
- A single red cross or red crescent on a white background should be used as a protective sign in case of armed conflict or internal disturbances.
- Protective signs (flags) on vehicles may only be used with approval of the country representative following consultations with the manager of the security unit in Geneva, and the host National Red Cross or Red Crescent

Society. ICRC should be consulted if it is the lead agency in the area of operations. Note: this process is in place to ensure that we do not undermine or wrongly use the protective emblem and so that a correct, universal and unified usage is maintained.

- Red cross or red crescent flags may be used to identify Federation premises, compounds, refugee camps and other official sites in cases of disturbances.

### The Third Protocol

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- On 14 January 2007, the Third Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 entered into force. The new protocol introduced a protective emblem with equal status and relevance to the red cross and red crescent emblems. It is also known as the red crystal.
- It will appear as a red frame in the shape of a square on edge, on a white background, and is free of any religious, political or other connotation.
- By offering new possibilities for protection and identification to National Societies and states that wish to use the additional emblem, the Third Protocol exemplifies the Movement's commitment to neutral and independent humanitarian action.
- The adoption of an additional emblem will enable societies that find it difficult to use either the red cross or the red crescent to be recognized as components of the Movement and members of the International Federation.

### The International Federation logo

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**International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

- The International Federation uses as its logo two globally recognized emblems – the red cross and the red crescent – set on a white background within a red rectangle.
- The International Federation can use both emblems indicatively because it is neither a state nor a National Society.

- ❖ The International Federation's logo is to be displayed on vehicles of its delegations and official premises as an indicative sign. The logo is displayed in the form of stickers and not as a flag, since no Federation flag exists as such.
- ❖ The International Federation's logo has no legal protective value and is not to be used as a sign of protection.
- ❖ In exceptional cases, and following prior authorization from the director of the International Federation's coordination and programmes division through the manager of the security unit in Geneva, the country representative may decide not to display the logo for security reasons.

### International Federation, Participating National Society and National Society interaction

Depending on the type and scope of an operation, individual Participating National Societies (PNSs) will direct resources to establish and maintain a presence in the country being assisted. This is often through direct or bilateral support arrangements made with the host National Society. Sometimes, this involves the deployment of bilateral delegates by the PNS who may or may not have their own country representative on the ground. In either case, the question of security management is an important one and needs to be clearly defined. There are basically two options for the security management of PNSs and their delegates:

1. To have totally independent security management (i.e., they are entirely responsible for their own security).

For example, a National Society may choose to operate under a bilateral arrangement with the host National Society and operate independently of the International Federation operation. The PNS is then responsible for all of its operational arrangements, including security. This occurred during the tsunami operation in Indonesia.

2. To be fully integrated into the security management of the International Federation's delegation. In other words, the PNS agrees to subordinate security management to the International Federation.

For example, a PNS may choose to operate under the International Federation's umbrella and enter into a service or integration agreement with the International Federation. The International Federation will then provide administrative and operational support, including aspects of security such

as: the provision of radio support and inclusion in the International Federation's radio network; the provision of security regulations; inclusion in the International Federation's contingency plans; briefing and debriefing staff; crisis management support; the provision of situation updates and reports; and incident management.

Regardless of the option adopted, the PNS always retains ultimate responsibility for its personnel.

Chapter 1 of *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers* discusses the procedures and issues that must be addressed when PNSs and their delegates agree to integrate into the security management structure of the International Federation.

## Security and specialized disaster response teams

If disaster strikes, the International Federation may be requested to assist the local National Society with specialized disaster response mechanisms that it has developed in the last decade together with particular member National Societies. These tools are intended to be deployed within a few days of an emergency when the situation on the ground is changing by the hour, and there is great confusion coupled with poor communications capabilities. The security of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel becomes even more imperative in such situations, where the country's infrastructure may have been severely affected resulting in damage to the transport infrastructure and communications networks. This section details the purpose and function of the main first-response teams, and how they fit into the International Federation's security framework.

### Field Assessment and Coordination Team (FACT)

A core group of experienced Red Cross and Red Crescent disaster managers from within the International Federation with different areas of expertise in various emergency response fields such as relief, logistics, health, nutrition, public health, and water and sanitation, are trained to support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, particularly in the initial days of a major disaster response.

## Emergency Response Unit (ERU)

Emergency Response Units are self-contained teams of specialist professionals and pre-packed sets of standardized equipment – including food, beds, tents, electricity generators, and mobile telephone and office equipment – which is stored in light, easy-to-carry containers. ERU teams are all part of the International Federation's response mechanism and, as such, fall under its security management in all areas where the International Federation is the lead agency. Security considerations are the same for both FACT and ERU teams.

## Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT)

RDRT teams were initially intended to assist the host National Society in assessment and initial coordination in medium-sized disasters. Since the Indian Ocean tsunami and the South Asia earthquake in 2004 and 2005 respectively, RDRTs have been used increasingly as a regional, cross-border partnership arrangement for disaster preparedness and disaster response. RDRT team members integrate into the International Federation's security structure and have the same rights and responsibilities as other Federation staff when it comes to security.

Security tools at the disposal of any of the specialized disaster response teams – FACT, ERU and RDRT – include:

- ✦ security unit support 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- ✦ specific security template for emergency missions
- ✦ various security documents and guidelines on FedNet
- ✦ direct security unit support with security delegates when required

Field movement control is also an important part of the security of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel, especially during initial emergency response. The most basic security requirement is that the team leader should at all times have an overview of where all personnel are located.



**FACT/ERU security management.** If there is a delegation, then the teams will integrate into the existing delegation security structure (modify the existing security structure if required). If there is no delegation, but a FACT mission, then the FACT team leader is the overall security manager. If the ERU is alone, then the ERU team leader is responsible for security and will create ERU security plans/regulations (with support from the security unit). If there are several ERU teams, then it is important that there is an agreement as to who will have overall responsibility for security and this has to be made clear to all ERU members.

## Basic security dos and don'ts

### Do

understand the seven pillars and how they relate to you

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be aware of the security strategies and how they apply to your operation

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ensure you have received a briefing

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ensure you have received a copy of your delegation's security regulations and contingency plans and can understand them

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maintain a high level of security awareness

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report any changes or if anything out of the ordinary occurs

### Don't

ignore or break security regulations

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act in an arrogant or superior way towards local staff or other people

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become complacent



**T**hroughout this manual, it will be emphasized that ensuring personal security in the field is dependent on many factors such as having effective security management and clear rules and procedures for your delegation. However, there are numerous factors affecting personal security that you have direct influence over. The most important of these include how you behave while on assignment, how culturally aware you are of the area you are assigned to and how you deal with stress.

This chapter will provide you with basic dos and don'ts for various situations to help enhance your personal security while on mission. It helps to remember that security is not an option: it is your responsibility.

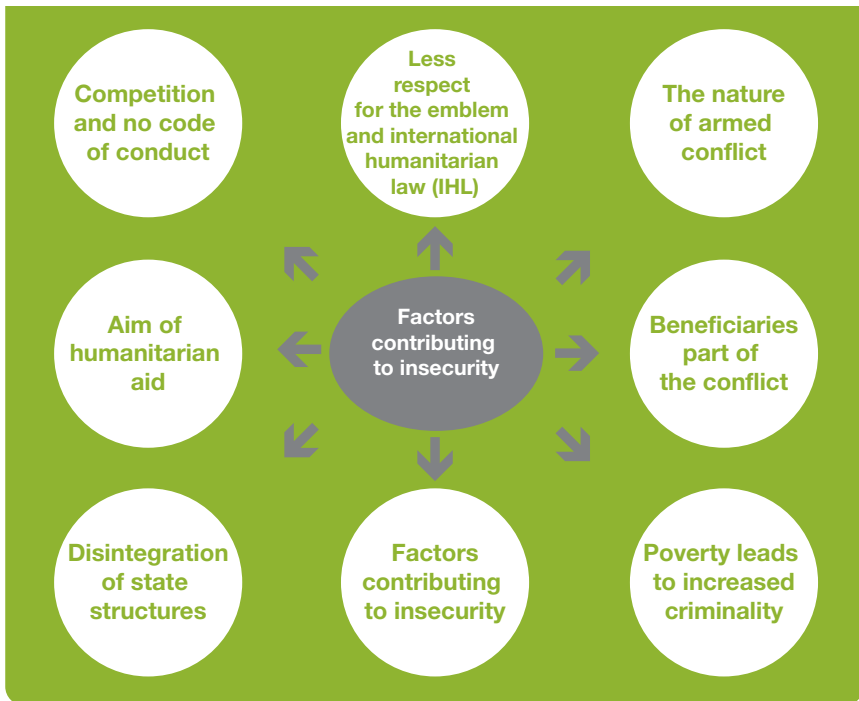
## Security awareness

Before beginning to analyse your current situation, you should be aware that there are a number of factors contributing to insecurity globally, as shown in the diagram below.

### Less respect for the emblem and international humanitarian law

Previously, the red cross and red crescent emblems were well recognized, respected and provided a degree of protection to personnel. International humanitarian law (IHL) also provided a further layer of protection, and parties to a conflict operated within the laws of armed conflict. However, in recent times, there have been attacks on Red Cross and Red Crescent staff, and staff must be aware that the emblem does not provide a 'bulletproof vest' and that, today, it may provide less protection than it once did.

## Federation security framework



### The nature of armed conflict

Increasingly, internal conflicts involve irregular combatants (e.g., rebel forces, child soldiers, etc.) that have extremely limited knowledge of the laws of armed conflict, while often their tactics pay little heed to humanitarian values. The threat to humanitarian workers in these conflict zones is, therefore, often high.

### Beneficiaries' part of the conflict

Where there are a high number of refugees or internally displaced people in a conflict zone they are often still caught up in the conflict. Factions may cross borders to attack them in refugee camps or to attempt to recruit new fighters. Beneficiaries may also be attacked by protagonists as part of a terror campaign to destabilize the country and strengthen their position; Sierra Leone and Kosovo in

the 1990s, and, more recently, Darfur in Sudan, and Chad provide examples of this. This poses a threat to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel working to bring aid to those in need of assistance.

### Poverty leads to increased criminality

In many disaster and conflict zones, people have lost almost everything which often results in their resorting to crime to feed their families. As aid workers, we are often seen as rich by the local population's standards and are not spared being targets of crime just because we are there to help them.

### Natural disasters

Deployment response times to natural disasters have decreased significantly and, where it previously may have taken weeks to get a relief operation under way, today Field Assessment Coordination Teams and Emergency Response Units can be deployed within hours to the site of a disaster. Often, therefore, the disaster is still going on and they become part of it, as in the case of aftershocks following an earthquake, flooding, etc. The threats to the safety of personnel can, therefore, be high.

### Disintegration of state structures

Increasingly, there are cases where the state has little control over various areas of the country and where it is, therefore, unable to ensure basic security or the provision of the basic necessities for living. The situations in Iraq and Afghanistan are present-day examples of this.

### Aim of humanitarian aid

Some organizations operate, in effect, as an arm of national policy. As such, their programmes are tied to expected results for specific beneficiaries and are, therefore, not independent. Often, military resources are used to deliver aid, creating confusion as soldiers are carrying arms one day and bags of food the next.

### Competition and no code of conduct

The number of humanitarian organizations has increased significantly over recent years. Many of these organizations operate with good intentions but without adherence to a code of conduct. All want to be seen assisting beneficiaries and often make promises they cannot deliver, which impacts on other organizations working in the same operational area.

Throughout all planning and management you need to be aware that circumstances can often change rapidly. Therefore, it is important to maintain constant awareness of your surroundings and how they may affect on your security.

Being security aware means you understand that there is the potential for threats to develop that can deliberately or accidentally harm you, your colleagues and the assets used in the operation.



**Remember!** Security awareness is everyone's responsibility.



## The frog in the pot

There is an old fable that says if you put a frog into a pot of boiling water, it will leap out right away to escape the danger.

But if you put a frog in a pot filled with water that is cool and pleasant, and then you gradually heat the water until it starts boiling, the frog will not become aware of the threat until it is too late.

### **A frog's survival instincts are geared towards detecting sudden changes**

This story is used to illustrate how people may get themselves into trouble. It is often used to symbolize how humans have to be careful to watch for slowly changing trends in the environment – not just sudden changes. It is a warning to us to keep paying attention not just to obvious threats, but also to more slowly developing ones.

Since prevention is a fundamental element of the International Federation's approach to security, you must always be aware of your current situation and the potential changes that may occur within the environment that you are operating in. This is in addition to understanding the security rules and the procedures for what to do in a given situation. If you have personal observations or learn new information that could impact on security, share it with your colleagues so that the rules or procedures can be updated accordingly.

### Threat/risk assessment

The senior field manager will complete a threat/risk analysis for the operation as a whole and will then be able to determine the threats to the operation, where the operation is vulnerable and, through this, the resultant risks. He or she will then develop a security plan to mitigate these risks.

As everyone has a responsibility towards security, it is important that individuals consider their own personal threat/risk analysis in terms of their actions and how they are operating. In order to do this, you first need to understand the difference and relationships between threats, vulnerabilities and risks.

A security threat is a potential act or danger in the operational environment that may cause injury or harm to you. You should have been briefed on the threats facing the organization and, from these, you should be able to determine how they relate to you personally.

Vulnerability is the extent to which you are exposed to a threat and the potential impact it could have on you. This could result from the way you are operating, your behaviour or simply the environment.

Risk is the likelihood that a threat, incident or accident will happen to you.

$$\text{threat} + \text{vulnerability} = \text{risk}$$

Effective personal security management relies on determining the risks facing you and ensuring that you take appropriate steps to mitigate those risks. Chapter 2 of *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers* outlines how to conduct this analysis. You may find it useful to review elements of this chapter, particularly the concept of the risk planning matrix, as you consider your own situation. The first major step in this respect is to ensure that you understand the key components of the security plan and follow security regulations.

## Cultural awareness



The International Federation is made up of over 185 member National Societies representing nearly every country in the world. The nature of the organization and the international settings it works in imply that you will work with people from different cultures and in areas with different cultural norms to your own.

A delegate's culture directly affects his or her values which, in turn, influence his or

her attitudes and behaviour. People tend to behave and to expect others to behave in set ways. If they do not, one can often be surprised, offended, or even angered, depending on the situation.

### What is culture?

**"A set of social codes governing values, norms and behaviour, held consciously or unconsciously by groups of people."**

Although you may be used to working with colleagues from different cultures, you must always remain aware of the communication and relationship problems that can result from simple ignorance or a lack of sensitivity. There is a very real danger in believing that cultural differences are not important simply because we tend to work, dress and speak in similar ways.

### Handling cultural sensitivities

Below are some tips on how to maintain cultural sensitivity when on a field mission that will help to maintain your personal security, the dignity of your colleagues and of the beneficiaries you are there to help.

- ✎ Know yourself and your own culture.
- ✎ Be prepared to learn and to adapt to new ways of getting things done.
- ✎ Show empathy and communicate respect and interest for other cultures.
- ✎ Assume that there are differences until sure of the similarities.
- ✎ Be non-judgemental, flexible and tolerant of other people's customs. Do not assume that your own ways and culture are better, and understand they are only different to your own.
- ✎ Be tolerant and do not get upset when unsure of a situation, status or other people's reactions.
- ✎ Cultures also differ in the importance attached to seniority; age can be more important than qualification or experience.
- ✎ Do not assume the worst: look for other explanations if the other person's behaviour seems to be offensive.
- ✎ Show ethical behaviour as you are representing the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



**Remember!** We are the ones that have to adapt to and respect the local culture, its traditions, religions and laws; it is not the local population that should adapt to us. The smoother and faster we can adapt the better we will be accepted, while potential security problems will be minimized.

## Dos and don'ts of delegate behaviour

### Do:

know your delegation's security rules/regulations, including its emergency plan

keep the delegation informed of your whereabouts at all times

share information with and listen to other delegates

have a first-aid kit and know how to use it

anticipate threats and react calmly

carry International Federation identification with you at all times

carry the correct change and/or local phonecards or tokens

respect security rules and curfews

respect local laws, habits and traditions

always provide feedback and report on trips or incidents to the International Federation's country representative

plan your movements and obtain updated security information on the area

always remain calm and polite

### Don't:

panic under threat

take risks

use a camera without permission

provoke situations

lose your integrity; you need to maintain a professional distance from the beneficiaries

lose your head and argue

## Travel/mission preparedness

Below are some tips to help increase your preparedness for travel while on mission or prior to departing from your home country for a mission in the field.



- » Always pack a change of clothes in your hand luggage in case your checked-in luggage gets lost or delayed.
- » Make sure that medicine, valuables, important belongings, equipment or documents crucial to your work are all placed in your hand luggage.
- » Make sure you research the area or country you are travelling to before departure in order to heighten your awareness.
- » Make sure you have understood all the health requirements in the area or country you will be working in as well as in the wider region.
- » Be clear about travel details (for example, who is meeting you at the other end and making sure that you have the delegation's contact numbers).
- » After arriving, get to know the situation on the ground fast.
- » Register with your national embassy so that you receive their security updates and are kept up to date about any specific threats or problems in the country relating to your particular nationality. However, always remember that you are obliged to follow International Federation directions despite the fact that, at times, these may conflict with those of your embassy.



### Important documents to keep at hand

#### Remember! Ensure you have:

- ✦ International Federation identification (ID) card
- ✦ passport and appropriate visas
- ✦ medical/dental records and medication or prescription
- ✦ driving licence
- ✦ financial information (e.g., credit card numbers and cancellation contacts, bank account access, etc.)
- ✦ key contacts list

### Airport security

Although this section deals with airports, it is also applicable to ports and any border crossing point.

Airports around the world are a hunting ground for criminals and should be considered a serious threat to individuals, particularly in terms of petty crime. You therefore need to maintain high security awareness when at an airport. Your vulnerability may be increased because you are: new to a particular airport; stressed due to travel; tired or jet-lagged after a long flight. Airports can also create a false sense of security because there are many people, lights and security personnel.

Below are some airport security tips to keep in mind.

- ✦ Act as if you know the airport and be confident; do not look new, lost or confused.
- ✦ Do not leave your bags unattended.
- ✦ Do not put your travel wallet in the tray of a trolley: keep it in a bag until needed.
- ✦ Keep bags in sight when sitting at a table and do not leave them sitting beside you where you can be distracted and someone can take them. If you have a bag beside you, then put your foot through the shoulder strap.
- ✦ If you set off the metal detector alarm do not lose sight of your bags on the X-ray belt while you are being screened.
- ✦ Be wary of strangers talking to you as they may be trying to distract you while their accomplice takes some of your belongings.
- ✦ Be wary of non-registered porters offering to take your bags.
- ✦ Do not agree to look after a stranger's bags while in a waiting area.

## Taxis

While in the field, you may need to make occasional or frequent use of taxis for local transport purposes. There are sure to be differences with using a taxi in your home country. As you are likely to be easily identified as a foreigner based on your appearance, manner of dress and inability to speak the local language, you should:

- ❖ avoid casual, non-registered taxis; ensure the taxi has the driver's photo and licence clearly displayed
- ❖ use only reputable taxi operators, a list of which should exist in the International Federation's office
- ❖ check with the information desk for registered and reputable operators if arriving at a new location and you find you need to use a taxi
- ❖ make sure you have sole use and the driver will not pick up other passengers; in some places, this may cost more but is worth the extra money to keep you safe
- ❖ always keep handbags on the floor and not on the seat beside you
- ❖ ensure the doors are locked to prevent others getting in if the taxi stops at traffic lights, etc.
- ❖ make sure your luggage is actually on board before settling into the taxi

## Accompanying family members

In duty stations where families are able to join you on your mission they must be briefed that security regulations apply equally to them. There are also additional security issues and considerations for staff and accompanying family members.

Personal security – including that of your family members – is largely a matter of common sense and habit. Initially, you may have to consciously establish procedures and develop new habits to make yourself and your family more aware of security and keep them safe from security threats. Over time, this will become second nature and will be well worth the investment.

## Special considerations for children and rules they should follow

### Do:

keep your parent(s) in sight when you are out

go to a policeman or shop assistant if you are lost or need help

learn a password that only your family knows

learn key phrases in the local language(s)

report anyone who tries to harm or assault you

always tell someone where you are going and what your plans are

travel in groups, or at least in pairs

stay on busy streets

### Don't:

go with strangers

go anywhere with anyone without permission from your parent(s)

get into a car or go into a house without permission

accept anything from strangers

go to isolated areas

## Rules for parents

### Do:

have your child or children present during interviews of domestic staff and note their reactions

keep a list of emergency numbers near the phone

teach children never to give personal information over the phone or to a stranger

caution children to always lock the doors while at home

model appropriate behaviour for your children

rehearse situations with your family

have someone from the family stay with the child if they are ill

always give children a sense of security

### Don't:

ever leave a child alone in public

ignore your child's stated desire of not wanting to be with someone; there is probably a reason

let your children open the door to a stranger without adult approval

### Teach children:

- ✎ never to go with strangers
- ✎ your home address
- ✎ your home phone number
- ✎ your office phone number
- ✎ how to use telephones, including local public phones

### In crisis situations:

- ✎ give children information appropriate to their age
- ✎ if a child has experienced a critical incident, ensure that appropriate counselling is provided
- ✎ let children acknowledge their feelings and encourage them to be physically active
- ✎ remember children 'borrow' strengths from adults around them, so if adults are calm then children will take heart from this

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## Rules for babysitters

### Do:

follow the security instructions given to household staff

know the danger to children posed by matches, petrol, stoves, deep water, swimming pools, poisons and falls

know the location of all exits and phones in case of emergency

know who else has access to the house (friends of family or children), and who has not

ask the parents to leave a telephone number where they can be reached

know the names and ages of the children

### Don't:

ever leave the children alone – even for one minute

## Household staff and security

It is important to always treat your household staff with respect. Pay them fair wages and be sure that their compensation and benefits (for example, social security, tax and health insurance payments) are in accordance with local laws. In many ways, domestic helpers are a first line of safety and security for your family. Before hiring domestic help, be sure:

- to conduct a careful screening, including carrying out reference checks, in-person interviews, and a check with the local staff or host National Society, non-governmental organizations, other internationals in the area and/or local officials
- to understand the domestic helpers' circumstances and any implications for security
- that you and all family members (and perhaps your security guard as well) comfortably relate to the individual(s) before they are hired
- to record basic information – full name, date and place of birth, address, telephone number and names of family members, names and contact information for any other key contact or reference

- » to instruct household staff (and babysitters) to answer the door (rather than members of the family), and not to allow visitors to enter without specific approval
- » that if maintenance or repair personnel are expected, the staff are informed of their estimated arrival time and should not permit them to enter until proper identification has been presented
- » they understand never to give a visitor or caller the impression that no one else is at home
- » they never tell anyone where the occupants are or when they are expected back
- » they know to report the presence of strangers in the neighbourhood
- » they know what will happen if they give access to your home to people who are not specifically authorized by you (or another adult family member), lose or give your keys to others, steal, or otherwise abuse their access to your home and their working relationship with you
- » they sign a pay-book each month acknowledging the amount you pay them

If you are forced to fire household staff for any reason, consider changing the locks.



#### Remember!

- Don't do anything to put yourself or others at risk.
- Never release information that could make you, your colleagues or the International Federation a target.
- Give up everything rather than your life.
- Stay cool and calm at all times.
- Think twice and act once.

## Personal items – grab bag

Once an alert level has been increased and there is a possibility of relocation, each delegate should have prepared, at all times, a grab bag of personal items, weighing not more than 10 kilograms.

The point is to be prepared to quickly grab important belongings in the event of a sudden decision to hibernate or relocate staff. The following items should be included in your bag:

- » passport
- » ID card

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- International Federation badge
- contract
- driving licence
- VHF radio and a spare battery and charger (if issued)
- key contact list
- cellular/mobile telephone or satellite phone (if issued)
- medication
- medical records, immunization cards
- spare glasses
- prescriptions
- credit cards, bank cheques and cash
- plane tickets (if issued)
- your personal fixed assets list
- laptop and other smaller electronic equipment
- personal items
- change of clothes
- water bottle
- 24-hour supply of food (if in an emergency situation or if the security phase level is orange)
- spare keys for your residence, car, office, warehouse



**T**he majority of security incidents involving Federation field staff and humanitarian aid workers generally involve vehicles and vehicle use. These incidents include traffic accidents, vehicle theft and the theft of equipment and/or supplies from vehicles. According to Federation statistics, approximately 50 per cent of these incidents relate solely to vehicle accidents – a similar trend in other humanitarian organizations. This chapter aims to stress the importance of safe behaviour when in a vehicle. Guidance on other security concerns relating to vehicle use, such as carjackings, checkpoint behaviour, ambush and reactions to violent situations are covered in Chapters 4 and 10.

Overall, vehicle safety in the field is the joint responsibility of the delegation's fleet team, security officers, managers, delegates, local staff and drivers. In other words, it is everyone's responsibility. There are a number of rules and regulations pertaining to vehicle use in the International Federation, all of which can be found in the *International Federation's Fleet Manual*, <https://fednet.ifrc.org/sw139014.asp> and on which the driving section of each country's security regulations are based. Following these rules and regulations and, thereby, driving safely and responsibly, according to the International Federation's standards, will reduce your risk of coming to harm while on mission.

## Driving Federation vehicles

The *International Federation's Fleet Manual* contains specific regulations and procedures associated with vehicle use in Federation operations. This section details aspects of the International Federation's regulations and procedures relating to security, and provides guidelines to enhance security when operating vehicles.

Always bear in mind that the way you drive and your attitude must reflect the institutional image of the International Federation as our vehicles are easy to identify and to remember.

### Who can drive Federation vehicles?

According to the *International Federation's Fleet Manual*, the following prerequisites must be met prior to driving a Federation vehicle. Drivers must:

- be Federation employees – not accompanying family members
- read and sign the 'rules and regulations for drivers'
- undertake and pass a driving ability test conducted by an approved person
- be in possession of a valid international driving licence
- not have any prior drink-driving convictions
- have written authority from the head of delegation

### Who can be a passenger?

- identifiable members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (International Federation, ICRC, National Society staff and volunteers)
- staff of other humanitarian agencies – but only with written authorization
- family members with written authorization from the country representative
- in an emergency, wounded or injured people can be transported based on need



**Remember!** All injured persons can be transported in Red Cross and Red Crescent vehicles – including soldiers. However, remember to enforce the 'No arms' policy and ensure they keep their uniform on as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions.

### Basic rules relating to Federation vehicle use

- The vehicles should display 'No arms' stickers on door windows, and no arms or military equipment of any kind may be carried in Federation

vehicles at any time, unless your life is being directly threatened.

- ❖ The International Federation has a zero tolerance attitude to alcohol consumption and driving. This means it will not tolerate any person being under the influence of alcohol while driving a Federation vehicle.
- ❖ The maximum speed for Federation vehicles is 80 kilometres per hour, unless local traffic laws stipulate a lower speed.
- ❖ Seat belts must be used at all times, including in back seats.
- ❖ All Federation vehicles must be clearly marked with the International Federation's emblem only.
- ❖ The red cross or red crescent flag must only be used in accordance with the instructions of the head of delegation. In cases of emergency at night, the flag should be lit with a spotlight.
- ❖ Local drivers must always be used when travelling outside towns (except in case of emergency). Delegates should avoid driving themselves inside towns.
- ❖ Federation vehicles should not be driven outside urban areas at night (after darkness falls).
- ❖ Letters, documents or cargo other than for official Federation business may not be carried.
- ❖ Compliance with local driving and traffic laws in the country of operation is mandatory at all times.
- ❖ The driver is responsible for issues regarding the loading of the vehicle and for ensuring that the number of passengers does not exceed the vehicle's registered limit.



**Remember!** Do not carry or transport anything that can compromise or jeopardize the International Federation's acceptance or security in the country. The International Federation is prohibited from using armed escorts, except as authorized by the head of delegation after consultation with the Federation secretariat in Geneva.

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## Facts

According to Federation incident statistics, most vehicle accidents and injuries are caused by:

- speeding (make sure the local drivers adhere to speed limits)
- driving not being adapted to the conditions (the type of road, wet or dry conditions and vehicle overloading will affect driving significantly)
- seat belts not being used, including in the back seat or on benches

## Parking

The International Federation's vehicles are clearly identifiable and you should take care when deciding where to park – especially for longer periods of time, e.g., overnight. Below are some general parking rules to follow.

- Federation vehicles should be parked at the fleet base or within a protected compound at the delegation's premises or delegates' houses.
- Make sure all keys (with spares) are kept in a safe place with the fleet/logistics team.
- Vehicles should always be parked with the front of the vehicle facing exits and with enough space between each vehicle to prevent the spreading of a fire.



- At night, select a secure, controlled and well-lit area. Check your surroundings before leaving the vehicle.
- Always make sure your vehicle is locked when you are leaving it.
- Before getting into your vehicle, look inside first to make sure no one is hiding in the back seat. Check underneath your vehicle from a distance and observe the vehicle from the outside to see if you notice anything different from when you left it.
- In high-risk areas use locking devices such as steel bars, gear-shift locking mechanisms, or immobilize the vehicle otherwise (disable battery, fuses, etc.).
- Do not park on the street if you have access to a secure parking area.
- Do not park vehicles in places where their presence may give the public a bad impression of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, e.g., bars, nightclubs, etc.



**Remember!** High organizational visibility is not always preferred. In urban areas where vehicles are used by delegates outside the scope of work, vehicles should generally be marked with small International Federation stickers.

## Security awareness and vehicle use

### Before using a vehicle

- It is helpful to conduct incident mapping and to familiarize yourself with the techniques used by local hijackers (e.g., roadblocks, 'Stop' sign attacks, vehicle cut-offs, fake accidents, false emergency vehicles, etc.), to avoid becoming a victim.
- Drive, think and plan ahead; know where you are going and how to get there.
- If possible, travel with copies of important vehicle documents and keep the originals with the fleet/logistics team.
- Avoid central locking for car doors as this will make you lose control of access to your car when getting into the vehicle in crowded places and markets, etc.

### While driving

- Stay on well-travelled, populated, well-lit roads and avoid dangerous areas or confrontations.
- If possible, do not travel alone. There is safety in numbers. Generally, criminals are looking for easy and single targets.
- If at all possible, avoid vehicle travel at night or when traffic is known to be slow (rush hour).

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## In practice...

While driving through an urban area a delegate using a vehicle with a broken rear window was attacked while stopped in traffic. The assailants climbed in through the broken window, threatened the delegate and stole valuables.

Never travel in a vehicle that is not roadworthy. Criminals usually look for easy or soft targets.

Don't let yourself become a victim of opportunity.

- Never set a fixed driving pattern.
- Always stop so that there is sufficient space between your vehicle and the one in front of you to enable you to manoeuvre past it.
- When approaching traffic lights, adjust your driving speed to avoid or at least minimize the time you stand still at red lights. Be prepared to drive away, sounding the horn and drawing attention to your vehicle if you are threatened or attacked.
- Keep your windows closed and your doors locked, even while driving. In hot climates, make sure that the air conditioning functions in your vehicle.
- In high-risk areas in particular, drivers should concentrate 100 per cent on the driving; i.e., do not talk to passengers, listen to the radio or daydream while driving.
- Think twice before deciding to offer assistance to what may appear to be a stranded motorist, regardless of gender, and do not pick up any hitchhikers.

## General security awareness

- Do not have highly valuable items in your vehicle and do not leave anything of value in sight.
- Be particularly alert when approaching or departing from your residence as this is often a favourite place for criminals to strike.
- If you are the victim of a carjacking, explain who you are and what the International Federation is doing in the country. Try to protest losing your vehicle, but do not resist. Give up everything but your life.
- The International Federation does not encourage the use of anti-carjacking devices/fuel cut-off systems. Most thieves also know where the cut-offs are located. Carjackers may also take you for a ride to check if you have any cut-off system or threaten those in the vehicle if they suspect the use of such devices.

## Dangerous situations relating to driving

- » speeding
- » local traffic conditions
- » size or type of vehicle
- » driving on the other side of the road to what you might normally be used to
- » accidents
- » ambush or carjacking
- » breakdown
- » checkpoints
- » mines and unexploded ordnance

## If an accident occurs

In the event that a Federation vehicle is involved in an accident, the following procedures are to be followed:

- » Prevent further accidents from occurring – if necessary, get off the road – and put up your emergency triangle to warn others. Always immediately report any accident to the delegation.
- » Assist the injured, if any, and remain in control: stay calm and do not panic.
- » Call the delegation and provide the position and a description of the accident (who, when, where, what, future intentions or needs).
- » If possible, let the national staff member(s) deal with the situation.
- » If possible, contact the nearest police station to try to get a police report of the accident for insurance purposes.
- » Advise the security unit and complete an incident report form.
- » If the vehicle has to be abandoned, remove antennas, radios, flag and the stickers, if possible.
- » Avoid signing any papers without taking legal advice, especially regarding the admission of fault or responsibility.
- » Make no agreement with the other party to pay any compensation without consulting security and legal colleagues.

In the unlikely event that an accident creates a situation that endangers your life (lynch mob, angry and violent population, etc.), then try to leave the area as soon as possible. Attempt to leave only if you are 100 per cent sure that you can get away. If not, explain who you are and what the Red Cross and Red Crescent are doing in the country for the benefit of the local community; appeal to the crowd.

**Note:** *Be aware that in some countries carjackers and road bandits orchestrate minor accidents to make you stop and exit your vehicle. It is therefore important to familiarize yourself with the local security situation and any existing threats.*

## Checklists

Before departing on any field trip using a Federation vehicle, remember to check the following items on your vehicle:

- Body damage that might affect roadworthiness.
- Windscreen, wipers, lights (including indicators) are functioning and spare bulbs are in place.
- Tyres are pumped to the correct pressure and are in good condition (including the spare tyre), and that you have a wheel brace and tyre jack.
- Fuel, oil and windscreen washer levels are adequate.
- Tools are included (e.g., tow rope/chain, spanners, screwdrivers, jump leads, and spare fuses).
- First-aid kit is in place.
- Fire extinguisher is full and in place.
- Radio is set at correct frequency, checked and in working order.
- Any other communications equipment in the vehicle, if applicable, is functioning.
- Horn is tested and functioning.
- Winch has been tested and all passengers are instructed on how to use it (winches can be dangerous if used incorrectly and staff must be trained in their use).
- Torch/flashlight is functioning and spare batteries are included.
- Federation identification is affixed and visible (except in special security situations where the Red Cross or Red Crescent is the target of threats).
- The logbook and a map of the area you are travelling through are inside the vehicle.
- Food and water supplies are adequate.



**Remember!** In 99 per cent of cases, you should remain at the scene of an accident and follow the regular rules and procedures instead of leaving the scene.

## Dos and don'ts of using a Federation vehicle

### Do

follow the driving rules and regulations

check your car is in a roadworthy condition and properly equipped before using

test that all radios are working before departure

inform colleagues about all your movements

always wear a seat belt

respect local traffic laws and speed limits

use a local driver whenever possible

stop at checkpoints or when ordered or threatened

report any accidents you are involved in immediately

park in secure areas

### Don't:

drive if you have been drinking alcohol, or if you are tired, sick or on strong medication

leave your vehicle unlocked anywhere or at any time

resist robbery

pick up hitchhikers

transport any arms or military equipment in Federation vehicles

drive unauthorized persons in Federation vehicles

use a mobile phone or radio while driving

drive outside urban areas when it is dark outside

drive if you are not familiar with the vehicle (4x4, engine size) or road conditions (snow, mud, etc)

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**Remember!** Listen to the driver, local staff and the local population; if you are in any doubt about the safety of proceeding with the trip, do not hesitate to stop and turn back.

## Case study

You are a construction delegate working in an earthquake-affected area where a number of humanitarian agencies are running operations along with the United Nations, which is also conducting peacekeeping operations in another part of the country.

You have been tasked to go to a nearby village to assess damage following an after-shock the day before. Just as you are departing in your vehicle, a colleague of yours from a previous Red Cross mission, who now works for the United Nations, asks you for a lift since he is going to a village not far from where you are heading. Since you have enough space in your vehicle, you agree.

On your way, you come upon a vehicle accident in which a civilian and an army officer have been injured. The group asks you to take them to a hospital, which is near the village you are going to.

### Security considerations to keep in mind :

- **Field movement procedures.** Basic procedures include notifying the base of where you are going, with whom, your contact numbers and estimated return time.
- **Change of itinerary; must notify base.** Any changes from the original plan submitted to the base station must be reported.
- **Regulations regarding passengers.** Only authorized persons can travel in Federation vehicles.
- **United Nations carrying out peacekeeping operations.** The United Nations may be perceived as a party to a conflict, especially when conducting armed intervention such as peacekeeping operations within the country or in neighbouring countries.
- **No weapons in vehicle.** A fundamental Red Cross and Red Crescent rule.
- **Soldier keeps uniform on.** Geneva Conventions.
- **Notify the radio room of incident** (procedures must be established where someone in the office monitors field movement; where there is no radio room, then someone in administration should monitor movement by phone). All security incidents or circumstances that might impact on your security must be reported immediately.

In the case study, the delegate should confer with his or her line manager or country representative to seek approval for the United Nations passenger. The decision has to be based on the context of the environment you are working in, as well as the country or area (e.g., there would be different considerations in Hungary as opposed to Haiti).

The delegate should assist the victims of the vehicle accident to the best of his/her ability. If there are no other suitable options, then one option would be to drive the victims to the nearest health facility.

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**F**ield movement presents one of the greatest risks to security in the field. This chapter will provide safety tips for the various means of transport that you may use for field movement while on mission. More often than not, you will use a vehicle for your field movement, which is why the whole of the previous chapter was devoted to it. In this chapter, you will be introduced to the planning necessary prior to undertaking a field movement and your responsibilities during one. There are occasions – especially in large-scale operations covering wide geographic areas – when air or boat transport will be necessary, therefore airline and boat safety are also addressed in this chapter. The last two sections focus on how you should behave to ensure secure passage through checkpoints and when travelling as part of a convoy.

### What is a field movement?

Field travel does not have to be solely work-related travel. It includes any travel away from the office, residence or other work-related premises that could be defined as your home base. Travel within urban areas does not generally constitute field travel, although in insecure environments or during times of heightened awareness such movement may be subject to movement notification procedures.

## Federation field movement procedures

The preparation of field trips will vary from one delegation office to another depending on the nature of operations, the risk assessment of the operational area, road and environmental conditions and the distance between your home base and the field location. However, all Federation field movement procedures require some common considerations be taken into account when you are planning and/or conducting field trips.

### Planning for field trips

Any and all field movements undertaken should be well planned and organized in order to keep your risk level at a minimum.

This includes:

- knowing the exact route you will travel
- possible locations for an overnight stay
- the weather conditions
- security information – understand the local situation including potential threats, local road conditions, the presence of checkpoints and other organizations operating in the area
- being aware of your surroundings during any field movements; listen to the driver, local staff and the local population and, if there is any doubt about the safety of the trip, it should be terminated or postponed

Field movements and any vehicle travel should correspond to an operational goal and, wherever possible, delegates should join up with other delegates visiting the same area. Is the vehicle roadworthy, do you have adequate supplies, communications equipment and all relevant documents? Do you know how to use the communications equipment issued to you?

- Check and ensure that the vehicle to be used is mechanically sound and fully roadworthy.
- Fuel, oil, water, tyres, etc., should be checked *before* departure.
- Radio equipment (VHF and HF) should be tested and the driver and/or delegate must be fully familiar with the operation of the radio systems and radio procedures.
- If radio communication is not possible on longer trips, carry a satellite phone for emergency use.

- ✦ If deemed necessary due to security risks, a two-vehicle rule (minimum of two vehicles travelling together, both equipped with VHF and HF radios for communication between the vehicles and the base) should be introduced and the vehicles should be within sight of each other at all times.
- ✦ If mechanical problems disable one vehicle, contact must be made with the base and approval obtained for any proposed course of action.
- ✦ Be sure to have road maps, food and an adequate supply of drinking water with you, in addition to the basic equipment that must be in the vehicle as discussed in the previous chapter.
- ✦ All travelling Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel should check to ensure they have the relevant papers or copies of mission orders, driving licences, passports, identification cards, etc., with them.

### Has travel been authorized?

- ✦ All vehicle travel – whether private or work-related – must conform to any restrictions that may be in place.
- ✦ The country representative should always be informed about and give prior approval to any movement of delegates within the country of assignment.

### Contingency planning

- ✦ If a field team does not return at a prearranged time and no communication with them is possible, then contingency plans must be in place on how to deal with such emergencies.
- ✦ Staff should also be fully familiar with emergency procedures, how to behave at checkpoints (discussed later in this chapter), in cases of ambush and in areas that are mined (see Chapter 10 for details).

All Federation vehicles used for field movements should be within a safe area or back at the operational base *at least* one hour before nightfall. This deadline gives one hour of emergency preparation – should there be a need – before darkness falls. For longer field movements, this means you must plan your travel more precisely and, if necessary, add a day to the trip in order to abide by the security regulations.

If an overnight stay is required, then details of the locations where you will be staying, contact points and contact schedules should be included in the mission order, or communicated to the country representative prior to departure.

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**Remember!** Radio and other communication equipment is of no use if you don't know how to operate it. You should request training on any equipment issued to you by the International Federation. There is no such thing as a stupid question.

## During field trips

All field movements should be authorized and monitored for their duration to ensure the security of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel. This is only possible if there is full compliance with procedures, the most common of which are outlined below:

### Notification

- Contact the radio room at the International Federation's base prior to departure in order to conduct a last radio check to identify your passengers and driver, call sign and destination (call lines or reporting points that you must respect along the journey should be agreed beforehand and, if deemed necessary, coded).
- Always inform the local authorities or the host National Society's branch, particularly if, for example, you are going into a new area for the first time.
- Informing the local branch at your destination that you plan to visit their area and of your travel plans is not only a professional courtesy, but it will also give you important points of contact should you require them in an emergency.



**Remember!** If in doubt about your safety or how to proceed, stop and return to base.

## Reporting in does not have to be complicated

You do not need a radio room with fancy gadgets in order to monitor movement effectively. The most basic field movement system must have the following features:

- Reports of who is going where, the estimated time of return and confirmation of safe arrival at the home base.
- Travel information should be stored centrally and be easily accessible.
- Some form of communications equipment available to use as appropriate to local circumstances.

If there is no radio room, then this can be done by someone in administration.

### Monitoring during trip

- As all field vehicle movement must be monitored, the personnel travelling should make regular contact with the base using agreed and, if necessary, coded call signs and contact points.
- Any changes in routing, destination or timing of return must be announced to the delegation and approval must be given.
- Confirm arrival at your destination.
- Report when departing for home base.
- Confirm safe arrival at home base.
- On arrival at an overnight location, contact must be made with the base by whatever means possible to confirm your safe arrival at the destination.

### Out-of-country travel

- For insurance purposes and as a general rule, you should not leave the operational area or your country of assignment without the prior consent of the head of delegation (given at least 24 hours in advance).
- If you are compelled to do so for security reasons, you should always try to inform the country representative of your whereabouts and movements as soon as possible.

Any and all security incidents that occur on your trip should be reported to the country representative immediately.

### Main points regarding Federation field movement procedures

- Must be well planned and correspond to an operational goal.
- Must be authorized and monitored for duration of field trip to ensure security of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel.
- Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel are not allowed to travel outside urban areas after the hours of darkness.
- Contingency plans must be in place in case of emergency or if safe arrival from field cannot be confirmed.
- Any and all security incidents that occur on your trip must be reported to the country representative as soon as possible.

## Air safety

As vehicle accidents account for over half of all reported security incidents in the International Federation (with similar numbers among other humanitarian organizations), it is our opinion that air travel is still a safer way to travel than driving for many hours with all the associated risks, such as poor road conditions, traffic standards, environmental conditions, crime, etc.

All air travel should be based on a risk management assessment, factoring in the safety rating of a particular airline versus frequency of travel. Air travel in most regions worldwide would be a preferred method of travel compared with land travel, given the dangers associated with land travel in many regions and in general.

For a number of reasons, including liability, the International Federation does not maintain an official blacklist of air carriers but instead consults with a number of sources. Based on these enquiries, the security unit provides advice on the safety of a particular airline.

The challenge with assessing the safety standards of a particular airline is that there are external factors that come into play such as a particular airport's infrastructure, air traffic control, weather services, handling, corruption, etc. Even reputable carriers such as Lufthansa and Air France increase their risk of an accident when entering some countries in various regions of the world. Information regarding the safety ratings of various airlines, worldwide can be requested from the security unit, bearing in mind that it can sometimes take up to two days to process the information request. Should you have any concerns regarding the use of a particular airline you are encouraged to contact the security unit for further information.



**Remember!** Information received from Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel based on their travel experience on a particular airline or from other sources can be a valuable tool when reviewing airline safety.

### Travelling by helicopter

The following diagram provides helpful information on how to approach and leave a helicopter. It may sometimes be necessary to travel by helicopter in order to gain access to hard-to-reach areas, or where the infrastructure is non-existent or severely damaged.



## Conducting air operations

Detailed information on the planning and conduct of air operations can be obtained from the logistics department at the Federation secretariat.

### Dos and don'ts of air travel

#### Do

plan air travel taking into account changing seasonal and local weather conditions, and always bear in mind that bad weather, or forecast bad weather, are good reasons for delaying flights in areas where the aviation infrastructure and safety regulations may not be up to standard

seek safety advice from the security unit if in doubt about an airline's safety

report any incidents or safety concerns encountered during travel to the security unit

#### Don't

board a flight if you have serious security concerns such as: the aircraft is clearly overloaded; there are too many passengers for the number of seats; excess baggage and/or freight are visible in the passenger cabin; the infrastructure and runway appear to be in a bad state; your seat does not have a seat belt; in winter, snow and ice removal procedures for the aircraft are not being properly observed prior to the flight; bad weather or visibility do not permit a safe flight (thunderstorms, fog, etc.), particularly in locations where navigational aid infrastructure is assessed as inadequate; security screenings are not properly conducted, and there is a high risk of unlawful interference during the flight.

## Travelling by boat

In some operations, Federation personnel are required to use boats as a means of transport. These can vary from inflatables to larger, hired vessels such as those used in the Maldives to travel between islands. In all cases, the team leader should ensure that:

- all personnel have a life jacket
- the boat helmsman and/or captain is qualified to sail the vessel
- the boat has an appropriate certificate for use

- » there is suitable safety equipment on board such as fire extinguishers, flotation devices, communications equipment, flares, spare fuel, first-aid kit, etc.
- » for longer trips, such as between islands, emergency food and water is carried
- » the trip is notified and monitored

## Checkpoints

At times, the mere mention or knowledge that you have to pass through a checkpoint can increase your anxiety levels. It is important, therefore, to distinguish between the different types of checkpoint you may encounter in the field. In normal circumstances, checkpoints are designed to:

- » observe and control vehicle circulation
- » examine the roadworthiness of vehicles
- » ensure compliance with driver and vehicle documentation
- » check for stolen cars, unauthorized drivers and the transport of contraband

In insecure areas, legitimate checkpoints also serve to:

- » identify vehicle occupants and the reason for transiting the area
- » check for the unauthorized transportation of guns, explosives, or combatants



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Personnel at authorized checkpoints, therefore, have a job to do that may not be all that pleasant (especially in extreme weather conditions), and checkpoint personnel may feel more at risk than you. If you are cooperative, patient and polite, and all your papers are correct and you have a legitimate job to do, then it is in the interests of all concerned to get you on your way as swiftly as possible.

However, in some countries, personnel at authorized checkpoints can be underpaid (or not paid at all), frustrated and scared, and may not see why you should proceed without question or without some compensation to them. In this situation, it is important to remain in the right and to stress the legitimacy of your position.

Another category of potentially more hazardous checkpoints is the temporary barrier erected by unauthorized or irregular armed forces for a variety of possible purposes:

- defining the limits of a territory
- extortion or robbery
- carjacking
- assault
- kidnapping
- execution/assassination

It is therefore important to recognize the difference between a legal, sanctioned checkpoint designed to protect public safety, and a checkpoint erected for the personal benefit and gain of the checkpoint personnel.

### Preparations vary according to context

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It is potentially dangerous to lay down strict guidelines on behaviour at different types of checkpoint since this will vary from country to country. For example, it may be customary to keep the engine running in one location but it may give the wrong signal in another situation. Therefore, on arrival in your area of assignment, find out if and where there are checkpoints and ask about the accepted form of behaviour.

Be aware that checkpoints can vary from an official red and white, custom-made barrier to a piece of string or stones across a track. You should find out – before travelling – how to recognize the usual forms that local checkpoints may take.

The accompanying box suggests how to conduct yourself before, during and after a checkpoint. But remember, this should always be compared with recommended local practice.

## How to behave before, during and after a checkpoint

### Before stopping at a checkpoint

- ✎ Observe from a distance, without stopping, to understand what is going on there.
- ✎ If you suspect that there is a risk of violence or other serious problems, turn around and drive steadily away if it is safe to do so.
- ✎ If several vehicles are travelling together, they should approach the checkpoint one at a time. Keep a reasonable distance between vehicles. If there is an incident, then a vehicle behind can report problems and, hopefully, evade danger.

### When approaching a checkpoint

- ✎ Inform the radio room at headquarters or your operational base discreetly by radio.
- ✎ Prepare yourself by: taking off sunglasses before stopping; turning off the radio/tape/CD player; turning off headlights at night well before the checkpoint; and, turning on an interior light.
- ✎ Open the window slightly.
- ✎ Approach slowly.
- ✎ Keep your hands visible at all times.
- ✎ Follow signals and orders but be sure you understand the signals given by checkpoint personnel (e.g., are they waving you on or to the side of the road) and stop if unsure.

### At the checkpoint

- ✎ Be polite, friendly and confident.
- ✎ Show your identification card if requested and ensure all documents are returned to you.
- ✎ Explain, if asked, where you are going (dissemination opportunity).
- ✎ If they insist, let them check your vehicle.
- ✎ Protest strongly, but calmly and politely, at the removal/confiscation of any items from the vehicle or occupants – but do not resist if the guard is persistent, violent or armed.

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- Avoid taking passengers.
- Make no sudden moves that could be misinterpreted, always explaining what you are going to do first (e.g., say: “I have to get my papers from the glove compartment”).
- Only let one person in the vehicle do the talking, unless a question is posed directly to another passenger.

#### **After the checkpoint:**

- Do not appear in a rush to leave the checkpoint.
- Drive away slowly and check that all is normal.
- Look in your mirror and remain focused.
- Inform your headquarters or your operational base that you have passed through the checkpoint safely.

### **General guidelines**

In tense conflict situations, avoid transiting checkpoints in the late afternoon – if possible. In such situations, soldiers at checkpoints may alleviate tension or boredom by drinking or taking drugs and, by late afternoon, they may be intoxicated and prone to overreact to otherwise normal behaviour, or they may openly threaten and try to extort money or goods from you.

Checkpoints can be a good source of information concerning the road conditions, recent incidents and possible risks ahead. They can help to update your broader picture of the security situation.

Over time, it is an opportunity to establish a rapport which can be beneficial but also potentially dangerous. If you become accustomed to the behaviour, e.g.,

### **Search of Red Cross and Red Crescent vehicles**

If security personnel ask to search your vehicle, then, in general, you should not refuse any such reasonable requests. Even though in some countries National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies enjoy certain diplomatic privileges, we always comply with local laws. Always be present during any searches to ensure nothing is planted in or taken from the vehicle.

being waved through a checkpoint without stopping and without checking, and one day the checkpoint personnel change, you will have to go through the routine of reintroducing yourself and explaining what you are doing. Aid vehicles have been fired on simply because staff became complacent and failed to stop on the day that checkpoint personnel changed.

Common tips regarding checkpoints that you should always keep in mind:

- ❖ Avoid paying bribes unless threatened and find out what the local custom is prior to getting into a compromising situation.
- ❖ Even if you do not smoke, carry cigarettes and matches, or pens as small, acceptable 'gifts' when you are asked "have you got something for me?".
- ❖ Do not carry contraband such as drugs, banned alcohol, undeclared currency, pornography or any restricted items.
- ❖ If the vehicle and/or baggage are searched, observe closely to prevent the unauthorized removal and/or planting of any contraband items.
- ❖ Have all your documents in order – passport/identity card, vehicle papers, driving licence, permit to travel, cargo manifest, etc.
- ❖ Before reaching the checkpoint, agree on who in the vehicle is going to speak and what you are going to say. Ensure everyone has the same story as unintentional conflicting remarks can create suspicion.
- ❖ Avoid carrying valuable items such as expensive watches, sunglasses, cigarette lighters and jewellery.



**Remember!** Even though you may have experience from elsewhere, always check local guidelines on checkpoint behaviour before embarking on a journey for the first time in a new location.

## Convoys

Convoys are organized groups of vehicles (passenger, cargo, or a mix) that travel together from one point to another for safety and security reasons. Under exceptional circumstances convoys may be escorted by security personnel (host country's military, UN peacekeepers or multinational forces) or may be 'protected' under the red cross or red crescent emblem or any other acknowledged symbol. For guidance on the use of armed escorts see Chapter 5 of *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers*, Working with the military.

Travelling in a group with other vehicles can greatly enhance the security or safety of members of the team in areas which have high degrees of criminality/banditry



or because of the difficulty of the terrain. Travelling in convoy adds time to a journey as the convoy takes time to organize and can travel only as fast as the slowest vehicle.

It is also important to bear in mind that, in some situations, such as travelling in areas experiencing armed conflict and rebel activity, a large convoy of vehicles may be misinterpreted as being part of that conflict and become a target of hostility. In such a situation, it is worth considering whether a convoy of two or three clearly identified Red Cross or Red Crescent vehicles may be more appropriate. Several smaller convoys may be better than one large convoy.

Consider the image projected when weighing up the merits of convoy travel. The sight of a convoy of ten, brightly painted four-wheel drive vehicles and trucks in good condition with healthy, well-fed, well-clothed, relatively wealthy occupants will arouse a range of mixed emotions among observers and checkpoint personnel. This can be contrasted with the impact that two Red Cross and Red Crescent vehicles travelling together may have. Clearly, there are good reasons for choosing either of the two options, depending on the circumstances.

The following section details some of the many considerations to be taken into account when organizing any kind of convoy. Keep in mind that not all of the considerations may apply in every single case since the purpose of convoys varies. Relief convoys travelling in difficult terrain with a large number of trucks will involve different considerations to a convoy of small vehicles travelling in an urban area, and so on.

## Planning

A convoy leader should be identified before departure, as well as a leader for each vehicle. The convoy leader is responsible for:

- ✦ planning the convoy, including:
  - ✦ ensuring that information about the area to be transited is obtained and assessing the current situation including the terrain, road conditions, weather and security
  - ✦ if required, conducting a security assessment of the route before planning the convoy
  - ✦ determining the estimated time of arrival (ETA) for each section
  - ✦ identifying locations where the convoy will stop to rest
  - ✦ seeking authorization from the relevant authorities, if required
- ✦ including alternative routes, that also need to be checked
- ✦ ensuring that the vehicles' weight, height and width do not exceed bridge specifications or maximum road loads
- ✦ ensuring the convoy's itinerary is known to all members of the convoy, as well as by the country representative and logistics and security focal points in the delegation
- ✦ if required, advising local authorities along the route of the convoy (details, timings and objectives). Note: However, this procedure will vary depending on the country and security situation. Travel plans should not be shared with anyone who does not need to know them.

At a minimum, travel plans should include:

- ✦ details (e.g., registration number and contents) of all vehicles
- ✦ names of the driver and passengers in each vehicle
- ✦ proper documentation (vehicle registration papers, the mission order and proper identification for all personnel)
- ✦ call signs (if fitted with a radio)
- ✦ origin and destination of journey
- ✦ intended route
- ✦ the position of each vehicle in the convoy; slower vehicles should always be placed towards the front
- ✦ planned stops along the route
- ✦ contact points along the route and location of towns, petrol stations, check-points and safe havens – should it become necessary to stop
- ✦ estimated time of departure (ETD)
- ✦ estimated time of arrival (ETA)

- contingency plans in the event of an accident, medical evacuation, vehicle breakdown or encountering natural hazards such as landslides or floods
- other reporting procedures

The vehicles used in the convoy should all be properly equipped according to Federation requirements as outlined in detail in the previous chapter, Vehicle safety and security. For your information, the three most commonly used items when travelling by convoy are:

- a tow rope
- battery jump leads
- a shovel

## Do's and don'ts of convoys

### Do

make sure that all vehicles are checked for roadworthiness and the safety of loads

ensure vehicles have their own equipment for repairs and changing wheels

check that all vehicles start with a full tank of fuel

check that radio communications equipment is in working order before starting out as well as periodically along the route, and ensure that the first and last vehicles are able to communicate with each other by radio

have one vehicle (the control vehicle) plus at least one other in radio contact with the base and with each other

agree to a system of signals using headlights and/or horns for those convoy vehicles not equipped with radios to indicate if a stop is required, emergency repairs are needed or if consultation is required

ensure that the driver of the vehicle in front always keeps the vehicle behind in view; in dusty conditions, frequent stops may have to be made at agreed intervals to ensure that everyone is still together

### Don't

bunch up the vehicles or tailgate (i.e., follow the vehicle in front of you at a dangerously close distance)

split up the convoy under any circumstances

use an armed escort



**A**s mentioned in previous chapters, there are a variety of measures you must take to ensure secure working conditions in the field. Bearing in mind that the International Federation's approach to security is proactive and based on prevention, this chapter will focus on the steps we must take to make our living and working environments as secure as possible when in the field. Guidance on selecting work sites, residences and warehouses will be provided, followed by provisions for safety when handling cash. The section on fire safety concludes the chapter. Security related to working in camps and crowd control at distribution sites will be covered in Chapter 6.

## Site selection

In general, when involved or tasked with selecting a site for Federation premises, there are a number of criteria you should evaluate to help you make a decision. The most important ones are related to a potential site's neighbourhood, accessibility, infrastructure capacity, physical space and boundaries, as well as to its vulnerability to natural hazards. Factors you should consider for each of these criteria are detailed below.

### What is a site?

A site is any place where a delegate in the field works, lives or stores assets.

### Neighbourhood

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- level of crime in the area
- proximity to potential targets: government installations, police, military, embassies
- distance from key buildings and installations
- the presence of other aid agencies working or with residences in the same neighbourhood; if other aid agencies are not present, then why not?
- the impact on our image if we choose a site in this place
- traffic density – the impact on access, noise levels
- vulnerability to specific health threats (e.g., swampy or vector-infested areas)

### Accessibility

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- multiple road access to and from site
- paved/unpaved access, overall condition and vulnerability to seasonal hazards
- lighting – is it adequate or does it require supplementing?
- vehicle and pedestrian traffic as well as visitor parking possibilities

### Infrastructure/basic services

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- adequate and stable supply of water and electricity
- telecommunications possibilities, such as the availability of telephone lines and radio reception

## Physical space

- » single or multi-level
- » parking capacity
- » fuel and equipment storage possibilities

## Physical boundaries

- » natural perimeters of property
- » type and condition of physical structure
- » need for any modifications

## Natural hazards

- » vulnerability to natural hazards (e.g., mudslides, flooding, avalanche, etc.)



**Remember!** Delegates should only live in Federation-approved residences and hotels.



## ERU site selection

When a disaster strikes an area with a limited or no Red Cross or Red Crescent presence, the International Federation assists the local National Society by sending in specialized emergency response units (ERUs). These units are usually

### Important considerations for site selection of the most common types of ERU

#### Selection criteria

Accepted by authorities and landowners

Accessibility for beneficiaries

Sufficient available area and room for expansion

Electricity power access

Space for two or three five-kilowatt generators and back-up generator

Access to sufficient quantity of high-quality water

Water table accessibility (ideally no drilling or boreholes needed)

Suitable access (by road) to water source

Waste disposal

Good soil conditions and drainage

Potential for contamination and toxicity is minimal

Latrine placement possible

Existing telephone and telex line

Availability of construction materials

Fuel availability

deployed in disaster-affected regions and need to be set up from scratch on suitable terrain, rather than renting an office, house or building that is already standing. Special criteria must, therefore, be borne in mind when selecting appropriate sites for the location of ERUs, as shown in the table below for some of the most frequently deployed types of ERU.

	Referral hospital	Basic health care unit	Telecommunications	Water and sanitation
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓
		✓		
	✓	✓		✓
	✓			✓
				✓
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓		✓
				✓
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓		✓

## Selection criteria

Storage possibilities

Wind direction

Road accessible and in suitable condition  
(for 20-metric ton vehicles in all types of weather)

Terrain is adequate for equipment and trucks

Logistics capacities

High enough and secure location for effective telecommunications

Lack of obstacles for satellite communications

Radio station set-up possibilities accessible and secure

Proximity to sources of interference (high voltage power lines, electrical railways, TV or radio stations, X-ray machines, high energy medical equipment, etc.) is minimal

Not in low-lying land (e.g., swamp)

Security can be ensured (i.e., living compounds separated, existence of escape route possibilities and possibility to place borders)

Equipment can be placed in a safe room  
(locked and/or guarded when not in use)

Local staff nightshift quarters and transportation possibilities

Distance from key installations (e.g., basic health care unit, hospital, etc.) is not too great

Distance to beneficiaries is not too great

	Referral hospital	Basic health care unit	Telecom-munications	Water and sanitation
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓	✓	✓
			✓	✓
	✓	✓		
	✓	✓	✓	✓
			✓	
	✓	✓	✓	✓
			✓	
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓		✓
				✓
				✓

When setting up a base camp you should use the above-mentioned criteria, but also use the other information in this chapter, such as office, residential and warehouse security. Access control, fire safety and perimeter security (fencing) are crucial security issues.

## Offices

The security of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel in the field largely depends on the implementation of procedures and safety practices put in place at the delegation's offices.

The security regulations developed in your delegation will provide specific rules for office security based on your particular context. As well as adhering to these rules, it is important to be familiar with some general guidelines on office security.

For example, the International Federation's office should be located in a safe area and all staff should already be – or quickly become – familiar with the neighbourhood. This means paying attention to what's going on and maintaining good relations with local staff and community leaders.



Emergency numbers for police, fire and ambulance should be known by all staff and be clearly displayed beside all telephones. You and your colleagues should know what to do in the event of an accident or security incident at the delegation.

Access to the offices should be strictly controlled and all visitors must be screened on entry. When a visitor arrives – preferably with an appointment to meet a staff member at the office – the visitor should provide identification and the receptionist must note his or her entry and exit in a logbook and provide a visitor's badge for the duration of the visit.

Doors at the office should be made of solid material, be lockable and closed at all times. Windows should be equipped with bars that open easily on the inside in

case of fire or the need for evacuation. Night guards or an appointed focal point should ensure that all doors and windows, including those on terraces and balconies, are locked after office hours and that all computers and electrical appliances are switched off and unplugged.

## Office security checklist

### Is the office located in a safe area?

Choose an office space away from obvious targets such as government buildings, power plants, radio and TV stations, residences of political leaders, etc.

### Look into the ownership of the building/office before renting.

Do we know who the real owner is? Ensure the person or company is reputable and not connected to criminal activity. Make sure that any work that is required to make the building more secure is agreed with the owner before signing the contract.

### Separate building for delegation offices or shared with others?

If shared, find out who they are and evaluate whether they are a potential security risk. Check if agreement can be reached with all other occupants if the need for increased access control and security develops.

### Is it safe to identify the premises with the International Federation's logo or not?

Normally, we identify the office with logos etc. However, in some cases where such markings may attract unwanted attention and make you a potential target, then a lower profile without logos may be necessary. You need to understand the threats.

### Is the building fenced or surrounded by a wall?

Determine if there is a need for this due to any security breaches or threats received.

### Is the office directly accessible from the road?

Make it as difficult as possible to storm into the office from a crowded street by ensuring there is some distance between the street and the entrance. A solid gate and fence should be considered.

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**Are all the doors solid and lockable?**

Make sure that it is as difficult as possible to enter the office uninvited. Remember the back door and windows, and terrace or balcony doors as well. Windows and doors at all entry and exit points should be checked regularly in the evening by someone tasked with this responsibility.

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**Should bars be placed across the windows?**

Remember to consider fire safety by making sure that some of the windows installed with bars can be opened from the inside in case of fire. Bars need to be firmly secured so that they cannot be removed from the outside.

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**Is a key control system in place?**

Determine who has a key to the office, who is responsible for the keys and who holds extra keys. Never mark the keys with names of office room numbers; always use codes such as colours. If keys get lost or stolen, change the locks immediately. Keys for the office doors or desk drawers should never be left in desks.

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**Are there lockable cabinets or drawers for confidential documents?**

Make sure you have a sufficient number of secure cabinets etc., to store valuable and/or confidential items.

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**Is there sufficient external lighting at night?**

Make sure that the office has security lights on at night to eliminate blind spots or shadowed and dark areas where someone could hide or enter the office unseen. Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel should avoid working alone at night or on weekends. If it is necessary to do so, all doors and windows should be kept locked.

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**Is there space for a front desk near the entrance to deal with visitors?**

In addition to the front desk, there should be a signing-in book, visitor cards, waiting area, intercom system, etc.

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**Is the safe secured to the floor?**

For insurance purposes, the safe must be bolted to the floor or wall in a discreetly located office. It should not be the front room in the office. Strict access control should be implemented.

**Do we work with a petty cash system? Do we pay staff via bank transfer, cheque or cash?**

We should avoid having an excessive amount of cash on the premises. Ensure that both the amount stored and the procedures for replenishing cash is on a need-to-know basis. It is usually preferable to pay via bank transfer or cheque, rather than cash. Also, avoid predictable routines.

**Are we using electronic transfers or are we travelling with cash?**

Pay-days and visits to the bank should be varied in order to minimize the possibility of a planned robbery.

**Has fire safety been fully considered?**

Are there any fire extinguishers? Where are they placed? Does everybody know where they are and how to use them? Are they regularly checked? Do we know the fire regulations for the country? Have smoke detectors been installed? Are the fire escape routes known to staff? Are they well marked? Have fire drills been conducted? Do we have a first-aid kit and do all personnel know how to administer first aid?

**Is there an alarm system or a need for guards?**

You need to understand the specific threats and complete a risk assessment to determine the need for guards and alarms.

**Are emergency numbers available and made known to all in the office?**

Lists should be widely available and placed beside each phone. Staff should also be provided with details of emergency contacts. You should also ensure you have a clear understanding of the office's security procedures and, if not, seek additional briefing from your field manager.

**Are parking spaces safe and easily viewed (for surveillance purposes) by guards?**

Ensure that all vehicle parking spaces are secure; i.e., they are well lit, are within the view of guards (or, at least, of office staff), and that access is controlled.

**Is there back-up power (e.g., a generator for the office) that is guarded?**

Consider the need for an emergency generator or power back-up, and ensure generators and fuel supplies are secured.

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Sadly, many thefts are perpetrated internally as a result of temptation and lax security: security cabinets left unlocked, money left unsecured, attractive items such as mobile phones, USB memory sticks and MP3 players left unattended on desks or in unlocked drawers. Avoid providing such temptation by ensuring effective security practices.

### Information security at Federation offices

Very often, you may not be consciously aware that the way you handle information can have an effect on your personal security and that of your colleagues. It is important to develop security-conscious habits as you go about your daily work to minimize the threat of security breaches.

## Dos and don'ts of information security

### Do

protect all information dealing with personnel, finances and plans

store all documents dealing with security matters implemented by the International Federation's delegation in the office safe

store all budgets, donor financial and narrative reports and other financial documents in the office safe

ensure all computers in the delegation have passwords installed and are changed every six months (passwords should be stored in the safe)

always observe caution when opening mail

leave your office in order so you can notice any changes such as missing papers and/or other belongings

keep travel itineraries confidential and share only with the country representative, fleet office and telecommunications base

keep international travel arrangements confidential

keep a low profile when talking about or discussing sensitive information in the office

ensure only authorized personnel have access to information concerning visitors' arrival or delegates' movements both within and outside the region

## Don't

give out colleagues' residential addresses or telephone numbers

leave money or attractive items unattended or in unlocked drawers or cabinets

leave official working papers of a confidential character exposed, such as travel plans, budgets or instructions from the Federation secretariat

give interviews to the press or make off-the-record comments to journalists; only authorized personnel should give interviews to the press on the International Federation's activities and other matters, unless otherwise instructed



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## Residences

As with the previous section, the security rules and regulations in force for your delegation will cover residential safety in your specific context. This section aims to make you aware of the most common risks to residential safety and to emphasize the sort of preventative and precautionary actions you should take as you go about your daily routine.

Residential safety is largely a matter of common sense regarding household dangers. Do not forget to take great care with smoking, cooking materials, all household chemicals and medicines, electrical wiring and appliances, floor and stair surfaces, combustible materials and any breakable items.

### Considerations prior to moving into any residence

Although there are many factors that are outside your control when you find yourself in a completely foreign country, there are some things you should consider when selecting the neighbourhood you want to live in that will improve your overall security and that of any accompanying family members.

First, note the condition of the street that the potential residence is located in as well as those surrounding it:

- Is the street paved or unpaved? Well maintained? Wide or narrow? One-way or two-way?
- What is the traffic density?
- Is there any lighting at night?
- Where and how securely can you park your vehicle?
- Is there a police station nearby?
- Is it a residential or commercial area?

Note the location of fire hydrants and police call-boxes (if any) and the condition of neighbouring houses and any security precautions taken by neighbours (walls, electric fences, guards, etc.). Look out for and try to avoid any nearby riverbeds, dense trees or brush, sheds or other areas of concealment that could be used by a potential intruder.

Bear in mind that in countries where fire departments are non-existent or unreliable (most of the countries where the International Federation has operations), the third and fourth floors are the most sensible options for staff housing. Fire service ladders generally do not reach higher than the fifth floor. Jumping or

abseiling from a floor higher than the fourth floor of most buildings is very difficult. As it is also generally easier for thieves and other intruders to enter a building on the ground floor, always choose apartments above the second floor but below the seventh.

There are also advantages and disadvantages when it comes to choosing between a house and an apartment. Apartments are generally safer than single-family houses and provide greater access control. Surveillance by potential intruders is difficult and some degree of anonymity is assured. While houses are more likely to be targeted than apartments, the occupant can control the level of security (by external security lights, the number of guards, etc.).

## House versus apartment: which is more secure?

As with other things, you will have to carry out a proper security assessment; for example, look at police and crime statistics. Are there more attacks and break-ins on apartments or houses? Talk to fellow expatriates and other international and non-governmental organization staff about their experiences before deciding on housing. You might want to look into housing within a compound – but be careful that the other people living in the compound are not high-profile targets, or someone that may tarnish the image of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

### Single-family house

- single target of a criminal
- may be isolated
- all costs related to security are borne by one person
- total access control
- guard quality control
- easy to detect someone on your property and to take action against unwanted persons

### Apartment

- safety in numbers
- access controlled by guard(s)
- usually one guard for multiple apartments
- less quality control over the guard
- shared cost of security
- once the intruder has passed the guard, he or she has unlimited possibilities to pose as someone living in the building and, thus, have more time to commit a crime

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## Security in your residence

### Perimeters

Any barrier around the perimeter of a house, even if it is only a symbolic hedge, serves as a deterrent. An intruder must commit an overt act in crossing the barrier and run the risk of being seen. That is why it is recommended that, whenever possible, a house has a perimeter barrier.

Examples of types of outer perimeter include:

- solid or block walls and fences
- picket and chain-link fences
- hedges and natural vegetation
- gates

The preferred option is to use solid or block walls together with a strong metal gate. The outer perimeter barrier is no stronger than the gate, so it should be anchored well to the fence or wall, swing outward with hinges on the inside and be equipped with a very secure lock. Keys to the locks should be stored in a secure but accessible location inside the compound or residence.

Inner perimeters refer to the exterior wall of the residence. All openings of the building that are on the ground floor, or that are accessible from trees or porches and that are large enough for a child to crawl through, should be fitted with grilles. Bars of solid steel, spaced ten to fifteen centimeters apart, with horizontal braces twenty to twenty-five centimeters apart, should be installed to provide rigidity and be securely fixed to the adjacent wall or frame.

At least one grille in each section of the sleeping quarters should be hinged and equipped with an emergency-release mechanism to permit an emergency exit in case of fire. Houses with single-corridor access to the sleeping quarters should have an iron or steel grille gate to control access to the bedrooms at night. This grille gate would constitute an inner perimeter and offer safe-haven protection for sleeping quarters.

All exterior doors should be metal or solid wood and have two locks: a primary and auxiliary or deadbolt lock. Additionally, each entry door should have a 180-degree optical viewer or peephole.

### Doors and locks

Primary locks are the main lock on a door and are identified by the fact that they have handles. These locks are usually the key-in-the-knob type of lock. In addition to your primary door lock, you should consider a secondary lock such as a deadbolt that is fitted to the door itself and locks into the door frame. It may be a key-operated deadbolt lock or it may consist of strong sliding bolts that go deeply into the floor (concrete is best) and door frame.

A door chain is not sufficient as a secondary/auxiliary lock and provides a false sense of security. An optical viewer or peephole gives more security as it allows you to see who is outside your door without opening it. A high-quality chain combined with a 180-degree peephole and effective primary and secondary locks are recommended.

### Exterior doors with or near glass panels or windows should be avoided.

If there is a steel-grille door as a secondary means of protection, a good quality high-security padlock could be used as the auxiliary lock. However, make sure that all the residents of the house have access to keys for such locks so they are not trapped inside in the event of an emergency such as a fire, gas leak, etc.

Maintain strict key control on all exterior locks. Do not hide an extra key to an exterior lock outside the house; experienced burglars know all the hiding places.

In addition:

- » control key distribution
- » change locks if keys are lost
- » avoid sliding glass doors unless they have a metal grille installed with a heavy

- lock on the inside, or they can be installed with effective locking devices
- lock/secure all utility boxes (electricity, gas, water) that are located on the exterior of the residence
- keep a spare set of keys in a sealed envelope in a secure place in the office (safe, key box, etc.)

Doors, locks, door frames and key control go hand in hand. There is no point having the most solid lock if the door is weak or if it has a feeble frame. Then again, if you do not have 100 per cent control over your keys, none of the above matters.

### Exterior lighting

Exterior lighting is an integral part of any anti-intrusion system. When properly used, it will discourage intruders and aid observation. Exterior lighting should cover all sides of the property, including any walls or fences, shrubs and blind spots not visible from the building. Lights should be placed on the building facing outwards – not on the walls facing in. Light fixtures operating on sensors are useful. Manual switches and overall light control should always be located inside the residence.

### Internal safe haven

In high-crime areas and where the security assessment indicates a need, country delegations are advised to establish a safe haven or safe room within the residences of all delegates. The idea is to have a room inside your residence where, in times of crisis, you could lock yourself in and sleep safely at night. This will normally require a barred security gate to prevent access to that room or area or the house. In some places, this is also referred to as a 'rape gate.'

The preferred solution is that you have a solid metal door into your bedroom if you live in an apartment or one-storey house, or, if you live in a two-storey home, a metal bar or grille door in the staircase leading up from the ground floor. It should be locked from the inside at night when all family members are asleep inside. You should also have bars on the window that you can open from the inside in case you need to escape.

In most delegations, alarm systems are installed that ring directly to a security company or the police. The idea with a safe haven is that intruders will not want to waste time attempting to break into the safe haven, but will be happy with what there is to steal outside it and get away before the police arrive on the scene. It will stop intruders from physically hurting, raping or kidnapping you or your family members.

In order to establish a safe haven within your residence you will need:

- ✦ a substantial door (with a solid core) equipped with an optical viewer (peephole)
- ✦ a strong deadbolt lock
- ✦ internal security gate or grille on internal door openings
- ✦ panic button/alarm inside the safe haven
- ✦ reliable communications
- ✦ makeshift toilet facilities
- ✦ a secondary means of escape
- ✦ fire extinguisher and a fire escape
- ✦ space to store emergency food and water stocks in operational areas where it is recommended to have such stocks, or if the operation enters a higher security phase



**Remember! Security starts with you.** In the past, there were instances where the safe haven saved delegates from violence, but there were also cases where delegates and family members were hurt because they did not lock the door (i.e., they did not use the safe haven correctly). At the end of the day, it is not enough to have the hardware: it is also about your discipline and correct behaviour. Don't wait until after an incident to switch on your security awareness: be proactive.

## Fire and safety equipment

Although fire safety is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, it is important to note here what sort of fire and safety equipment you should maintain in your residence at all times. For example, a fire extinguisher should always be kept in the kitchen area. You should also consider keeping a second fire extinguisher in the sleeping quarters.

Smoke detectors are recommended in the kitchen as well as in each of the sleeping quarter areas of the residence. If all the bedrooms are located along a single corridor, the smoke detector should be placed on the ceiling of the corridor.

A first-aid kit should also be kept in the common area of the residence for easy access. Finally, all occupants of the home and domestic staff should know where the first-aid kit is kept.

## Domestic staff

If you hire domestic staff, then their security and your security are closely linked. It is important to have confidence in each other, especially if working together in an insecure environment. There are various procedures that can be taken to safeguard the interests of the International Federation, yourself and the staff.

Whenever possible, recruit staff who have been employed and recommended by a friend, another reputable agency or neighbour. Take the time to check the references provided. It may be necessary to obtain a translation from a trusted employee who speaks the language. All domestic staff should be briefed on security procedures and updated as circumstances change, including about contingency plans. Remember to practise safety and security exercises with the staff.

If you find one of your household staff to be dishonest or to have stolen something (be sure before accusing them), dismiss the person immediately and escort him or her out of the house. Immediately notify all places where the worker may have been authorized to purchase on your account (such as markets), or to otherwise represent you, that the individual has been fired. Then report the incident to your manager using the standard incident reporting form. The manager will take the decision whether or not to contact the police.

If your household staff must have a key to your residence, have a special lock installed and keep the key (which no household worker has) separate from all others. Use this lock when you are at home.

Finally, ensure that household staff know which security measures you want implemented such as:

- identifying all callers before opening the door
- never allowing access to unauthorized visitors without your specific approval
- never providing information about you over the telephone to anyone
- never discussing your affairs with anyone
- alerting you if they see someone suspicious near the residence

## Dos and don'ts for living securely

### Do

keep your doors and windows locked whenever you are inside the home or even if you are only going out for a few minutes

get to know the location of the nearest health facility, hospital and police station

get to know your neighbours, including at least one who can help in an emergency and provide a safe haven

keep your curtains or blinds drawn on every window to prevent observation

make sure the entrance area is well lit

make sure that any swimming pool or pond located on the premises is covered with a safety net when not in use

ensure that your guard (if any) knows exactly what you expect, what the patrol should include, how often patrols should be carried out, and how the guard should sound an alarm in case of trouble; the guard must also know where to go and what to do if forced to leave the property by intruders

train your family members on how to use safety equipment and emergency procedures

have outside lights switched on

have an emergency kit prepared at all times

have a safe haven established in your home

check that communication with the delegation or with other delegates is working

have a torch, batteries, candles and matches ready in a central location (for power cuts)

always have emergency numbers readily available

think about fire safety and practise evacuation procedures

### Don't

leave valuable items outside the house and do not leave potential tools (e.g., axes, ladders, etc.) readily available to be used against you

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automatically open your door to strangers and, if they claim they are officials (including police), seek to verify their identity and mission prior to allowing them entry; make sure you know what legitimate police identification looks like

let a stranger use your telephone or allow him or her entry; instead, make the call for them

sleep with your windows open if at all possible

put your name or a Federation sticker on your door

employ house staff without checking their background and briefing them on security procedures

let domestic staff have keys to your residence; if you must, have a separate lock to be used when you are at home

employ under-age children (child labour)

resist robbery

select your home on the basis of comfort and facilities, but rather on the basis of security

### Security when in a hotel

As travel is required of many delegates working in the field, it is important to keep in mind some basic security considerations when staying in a hotel. Normally, the International Federation's delegation negotiates special rates with appropriate hotels in the operational areas and receives a fair discount for accommodating Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel. Furthermore, most hotels and lodges offer 'resident rates', which can be up to 60 per cent off the normal rates. Be careful, however, when selecting a hotel for your trip – work or private. Do not always go for the 'bargain of the year'. Armed robberies and break-ins can occur in any hotel, and the more shabby and isolated the hotel and location, the higher the risk may be. In most cases, the better the hotel, the better its security and response will be. This also goes for fire and natural disaster preparedness and response.

The following are some preventative measures that you are advised to take to avoid unpleasant experiences – even in the best of hotels:

- When checking in, be aware of who is in the lobby watching and listening.
- Never give out your room number to strangers and if reception announces

your room number out loud when checking in, ask for another room and ask that they don't announce the room number.

- ✎ Never invite someone you do not know very well or trust to your hotel room.
- ✎ Never leave valuables lying around your room while you are out – even for short periods of time.
- ✎ Never leave a bag or valuables unattended in a conference/meeting room, restaurant, swimming pool area, on the beach, in cars, etc.
- ✎ Avoid staying in hotels where dignitaries are known to stay since they attract all kinds of attention (paparazzi, demonstrations, bomb threats, terrorist threats, etc.).
- ✎ Avoid staying in a hotel where a big conference or meeting is taking place as these functions could also attract certain of the above elements.
- ✎ Always use the safety lock on the door, even during daytime.
- ✎ Always use the in-room safe for valuables or leave valuables in the hotel's safe, making sure they issue a receipt for your items. If this facility is unavailable, then carry the valuables with you in a bag, preferably locked away in the boot of a car.
- ✎ Always use a reputable taxi company, recommended by the hotel.



**Did you know?** You can now purchase cheap travel smoke detectors and fire alarms that you can take with you when you travel to hotels and temporary residences where there may not be any fire alarms, or where their quality is doubtful.

## Fire safety in hotels

- ✎ Always locate your room on the hotel's fire escape plan, normally found on the inside of your room door.
- ✎ Always memorize the nearest emergency exit route.
- ✎ Be tidy and keep key items such as your passport, mobile phone and wallet close at hand, so you know where they are if you have to leave.
- ✎ Never use lifts during an emergency evacuation or in the event of fire.
- ✎ If you awake to discover smoke in your room, don't lose valuable time. Call the front desk immediately to enquire and get advice, then get out and close the door, without wasting valuable time to collect belongings.
- ✎ If you cannot leave the room, seal all cracks with wet cloths, switch off fans and air-conditioners and make yourself visible by the window.

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- ▣ Keep all doors closed between you and the smoke or fire.
- ▣ If smoke enters your room, try to move as closely as possible to the floor, using a wet cloth to cover your mouth and nose.
- ▣ If available, aim fire extinguishers from the bottom to the top of the fire, giving multiple spurts as opposed to a single spurt or ejecting the entire contents in one go.



**Remember!** No matter what your specific living conditions – whether in a house, apartment, tent, hotel or shared accommodation – you have to consider all security aspects to ensure your safety and well-being.

## Warehouses

If the operation you are involved in has a relief component, it is very likely that the International Federation's country delegation may have to use one or more warehouses to receive and store humanitarian aid prior to its distribution throughout the operational area. The stored relief supplies are usually of considerable value in terms of both their cost to the donor and their value to the beneficiaries and the local market. Good warehouse security is therefore an essential consideration when selecting and using a warehouse facility.

All means of access to the warehouse – doors, gates and windows – should be kept locked, preferably with padlocks bought just for this purpose. The keys are to be kept by the warehouse manager only. A spare set of keys should be kept at the delegation or the host National Society (if it rents the warehouse).

The warehouse compound should be fenced off and open space should be left between the warehouse building and the fence. Clear and visible marking of the warehouse with the International Federation's logo or the host National Society's emblem may also contribute to its security.

Access to the warehouse is to be restricted to authorized personnel only, such as the warehouse manager, workers, watchmen and authorized National Society staff and Federation delegates. No one else may enter the warehouse without permission and without an escort provided by the manager.

If the warehouse is also used as a distribution centre, the distribution area should be clearly separated from the storage area so that beneficiaries cannot enter the

warehouse during distribution. No distribution to beneficiaries should take place *inside* the warehouse – even in bad weather. In the event of bad weather, plastic sheeting or tents can be set up in the distribution area when necessary.

Smoking is strictly prohibited in the warehouse and within the warehouse compound. Fire-fighting equipment must be available on site in case of fire and a plan should be posted and be clearly visible to all. The plan should include escape routes and action to be taken in the event of a fire.

## Warehouse security checklist

### Is the warehouse in a safe area?

Consider whether it is safer to have a separate warehouse or to share with other organizations.

### Is the perimeter secured by a fence or wall and guarded day and night with an alarm system?

### Are the doors solid and lockable?

### Are there bars/grilles on the windows, emergency exits and secure lighting?

### Is there a need (as well as the possibility) to install an alarm system?

### Is there strict access and key control?

Stock control procedures should be in place, including authorization for the movement of any goods.

### Has the background of staff employed at the warehouse been checked?

### Have fire extinguishers, smoke detectors and a first-aid kit been installed at the warehouse?

### Do all warehouse staff know what to do in case of accidents or a security incident?

### Is there sufficient and secure parking at the warehouse?

### Is the International Federation's logo displayed clearly and visibly (e.g., using stickers)?

### Are there electricity and water supply back-ups?

## Cash handling

The handling of cash in the field presents many potential security risks. People and vehicles carrying cash may be targeted for theft and so are at greater risk of personal harm. Special storage facilities and procedures for cash handling are required to maintain control and to ensure that funds are not diverted from their original intention. Each delegation will have specific instructions for the storage and transport of cash within the financial security section of its rules and regulations.

In general, all cash at a delegation or Federation office is to be held in a lockable container and the amount at any given time should be kept to a minimum. Holdings in excess of 10,000<sup>1</sup> Swiss francs are to be held in a safe.

If the safe is operated by a key, then the custodian of the safe – usually the finance officer – retains one key while another should be held off-site by the country representative. For safes with combinations, the code is to be put inside an envelope with a signature across the envelope's seal. The envelope should be marked as being the property of the delegation and held off-site. No other record of the combination code is to be made.

### Cash transport

As a general rule, funds for delegations (in the form of working advances) are transferred by the Federation secretariat finance department to the bank where the



1. This is the maximum amount; a lower limit may be set within the country as determined by the delegation.

respective delegation or office has its account. The movement of funds within a country and/or a region will also be done by and between banks. In these cases, funds are not to be carried by hand by Federation staff or delegates.

The transport of cash by Federation employees is an exception and should only take place in extraordinary circumstances (e.g., a critical and immediate need of funds or local banking problem) and with approval of the country representative.

## Dos and don'ts of cash transport

### Do

- make sure that where staff members are used as couriers, they are covered by an insurance policy (if possible) and that the cash is also insured
- ensure that cash in transit is always carried by two people and the cash split between them
- make sure that the office or delegation (or end destination) has a safe available upon arrival
- ensure the travel plans and transportation of cash are handled on a strictly need-to-know basis
- give the shortest possible notice of plans, timing, transport means and routes to those that need to know
- use discreet clothing, appearance and briefcase or bag
- vary routes, times and the type of transport used as often as possible

### Don't

- use the word 'cash'; instead, select a code word that is known only to the inner circle
- distribute or transport cash in high-crime areas; either try to select another area or consider using unarmed police, guards or security (with the necessary back-up), while realizing that this will result in higher visibility
- use cash in the first place; rely instead on bank transfers or cheques to pay salaries and settle bills
- get into situations where cash must be transported



**Remember!** No matter what your specific living conditions – whether in a house, apartment, tent, hotel or shared accommodation – you have to consider all security aspects to ensure your safety and well-being.

## Alarm systems

In many operations with permanent residence or postings, delegations use guards or some form of alarm system that includes personal panic buttons.

Test and make yourself familiar with the alarm box in your residence or office to not only to ensure you know how it functions but also so you can report any malfunctions. In some countries, guard companies carry out maintenance of alarm equipment.

If you have a panic button-activated alarm system, make sure the panic button is placed in the right room/location; and if you have mobile ones (e.g., the key-holder type), make sure you carry it with you at all times.

The police or your security company could advise on and recommend the type of alarms that have worked best in practice.

Security alarm systems have various functions:

- detection of an intruder
- reporting of the intrusion
- creating discomfort (loud, high-pitched sound) for the intruder

Some desirable features of an alarm system include:

- operation via the local mains electricity supply with rechargeable battery back-up
- time delay to allow for arming and disarming without activating the system
- manual activation of the alarm by means of fixed or mobile panic switches (such switches can be positioned for use by guards, office staff, store-keepers, etc.)
- easy to install and maintain

A fire alarm installed in a building should have a distinctly different sound to a security alarm and occupants should be aware of the difference as a result of practising drills.

## Fire safety

The process of ensuring fire safety begins with an assessment of all the premises used in the field by Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel. This includes assessing electrical wiring, sockets, emergency exits, windows and doors. This should be followed by the procurement and placing of appropriate fire safety equipment in all Federation offices, residences, warehouses, vehicles, etc. Finally, there must be procedures in place on how to respond in the event of a fire which are understood by all. Drills should be carried out at regular intervals and all staff should be briefed and trained to ensure they understand what to do in the event of a fire.

When it comes to fire safety, the International Federation's approach is, again, based on prevention. This re-emphasizes the need for you to be well briefed on security procedures in your delegation and to adhere to the security regulations at all times. This section will outline general and personal fire safety precautions that must be taken. It will also provide you with tips on how to behave when confronted by fire in a burning building or if you or someone else is on fire.

### Basic fire safety precautions

- Managers must ensure there are sufficient numbers of smoke detectors, fire alarms, sprinklers, fire blankets and extinguishers in place on each floor, of the right type and approved by authorities.



- Fire procedures should clearly state what is to be done by whom and how.
- Identify a delegate in all Federation premises who will serve as the fire warden and be responsible for implementing fire safety procedures, and to assume the role of coordinator if a fire should occur.
- Fire drills should be held at regular intervals (e.g., twice a year) and include training staff on the use of fire safety equipment and the designation of fire assembly points.
- Emergency numbers should be made available and be clearly visible to all.
- Ensure there are clearly marked fire exits, escape ropes and ladders, etc., if needed.
- Fire exits should be identified in each office and residence, and there should be at least one bedroom window, if equipped with bars, that can be easily opened from the inside.
- Check the capacity of the local fire service (if there is one) and make special arrangements if required.
- Ensure that a first-aid kit is in place and refilled regularly, with staff trained in basic first aid.
- Fire extinguishers should be checked once a year for pressure.
- Smoking is strictly forbidden in Federation offices and warehouses.

### Immediate action for fire response

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It is important that you do not panic when confronted with fire. There are many things that can be done to prevent a fire from spreading and to minimize damage and potential loss of life. The steps to take in fire response are:

1. Sound the alarm. Shout for help, summon aid and activate the fire alarm. Do not attempt to fight the fire until the evacuation of the building is initiated.
2. Determine the cause of the fire and the equipment available to fight it. If the source is an electrical one, it is important to first switch off the electricity supply, if possible.
3. Attempt to fight the fire but under no circumstances risk injury in the process. Note: Personnel need to be trained in the use of fire-fighting equipment.
4. If successful, continue monitoring the site to prevent flare-ups until help arrives.
5. If you are unable to fight the fire, evacuate quickly, closing doors and windows, if possible, ensuring no one remains in the building.
6. Give information to and cooperate with firefighters (if they exist in your operational area) when they arrive on the scene.

## Fires in buildings

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Fires in buildings can spread quickly, trapping people inside. It is important to respond immediately to any fire alarm or evacuation order. Do not assume it is a practice drill. Staff should plan ahead and learn the emergency exit routes from residences and offices. When in hotels or travelling, remember to look for designated evacuation routes and rehearse finding the nearest route if unclear about its access.

When evacuating a building, remember the following.

- ❖ Think ahead about what the route will look like – smoke may obscure vision.
- ❖ Cover yourself with a non-synthetic blanket, coat or other cloth – preferably wet.
- ❖ Before opening doors, feel the door for heat using the back of your hand, as there may be fire on the other side that will flare up when the door is opened.
- ❖ Stay low while moving as quickly as possible as it may be necessary to crawl along the floor to avoid smoke and heat.
- ❖ Avoid routes that are exposed to falling objects.
- ❖ If not on the ground floor, do not take the lifts or elevators – use the stairs.
- ❖ Jumping from more than two storeys can be fatal and should only be a last resort.

## If you are unable to exit using the normal fire escapes

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If you are unable to exit a tall building make your way to the roof. Offices or residences should not be located in tall buildings that do not have adequate means of evacuation during an emergency.

If you are unable to move to the roof, prepare to remain in the building by doing the following:

- ❖ Go to a room with an exterior window, mark it clearly to summon assistance and stay in that room.
- ❖ Close the main entry door and any interior door to the room.
- ❖ Place blankets or clothes at the base of the doors to keep smoke out and, if possible, use a wet cloth to make a better seal.
- ❖ Saturate any available non-synthetic blankets, coats or other clothes for possible use later.

- Stay low near an open window and continue signalling for help.
- If fire spreads into the room, get under two or more layers of blankets or clothes with the outer layers wet, if possible.



**Remember!** Most fires start small and can be extinguished if detected early. The best method for fighting fires is prevention through regular inspections, staff training and properly maintained firefighting equipment in all facilities of the delegation.

### If a person is on fire

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If you or someone near you is on fire, remember – stop, drop and roll.

#### **Stop**

- Do not panic and do not allow others to run about if they are on fire.

#### **Drop**

- Fall quickly to the ground or floor.
- If someone else is on fire, try to get them to do so. Tackle them only if you will not catch fire yourself.

#### **Roll**

- Roll flat over and over (back and forth if in a room) until the fire is extinguished. The rolling will smother and scatter the fire in most cases.
- If someone else is on fire, have them roll. You can use water, sand or a blanket to help smother the fire while they are rolling. Do not attempt to beat the fire out with bare hands; continue rolling instead.
- Once the fire is extinguished, summon help and begin administering first aid.



**I**n certain operational contexts, the International Federation may be involved in the management of camps for refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs). Depending on your job description, part or most of your work day may take place in camps. You may also encounter situations during your work in the field where it is necessary to help maintain order during gatherings of large crowds, such as at relief distribution points.

The guidelines in this section emphasize the steps you should take and what you should be aware of when planning any event involving a crowd. They are also intended to ensure the safety of Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel and the beneficiaries they are there to assist. Having alert and aware staff significantly reduces the possibility of spontaneous protests or demonstrations from occurring.

This is different from the protection issues of beneficiaries. The International Federation does not normally take on the responsibility of protection, as there are specialized UN agencies to handle this. However, if we are responsible for services in a camp or for managing it, we have a responsibility to ensure that protection needs are being correctly addressed.

## Camps for refugees and internally displaced people

There are some specific security guidelines for all Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel relating to camps that should be adhered to and that are outlined in this

section. Always remember that the International Federation or any Participating National Society working bilaterally is providing assistance at the invitation of the host National Society. It is therefore important that you coordinate all security-related activities in refugee and IDP camps with the host National Society.



### Security guidelines relating to camp management

1. The camp manager's office and Red Cross or Red Crescent installations should be adjacent to a main access route.
2. As assaults, muggings and kidnappings often take place close to camps on departure or arrival, have several alternative access routes to vary daily routines and avoid predictable patterns. Ideally, have two or more entrances or exits. Avoid dead-end and narrow, one-way streets.
3. Camp office security: Use common sense and basic office security guidelines such as those already described in Chapter 5. Keep as few items as possible in the camp office and avoid having warehouses and stocks in or close to the camp.
4. Federation delegates should never stay in the camp overnight.
5. A check-in/check-out system should be put in place for the camp so that a clear record can be kept of who is on the site.

6. You and all Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel should familiarize yourselves with the layout of the camp, including emergency exit routes.
7. Be on alert and maintain high security awareness in accordance with the security rules and regulations for the country delegation's office, and as outlined in the security assessment recommendation for the camp.
8. Keep yourself informed about what is happening in the camp, including any problems, tensions and arguments.
9. Create a plan for crowd control (see next section for more details) and share this with other delegates and staff and the host National Society.
10. Create a map or sign indicating locations of the various components of the camp.
11. Know what is expected of you in any security plan for the camp. Establish an evacuation plan and guidelines for the execution of it covering: the signal for evacuation; the continuation or closing down of services; re-grouping points inside or outside the camp; evacuation route(s); convoy arrangements, etc.
12. Maintain close professional relations with displaced persons or refugee community leaders, and partner organizations also present in the camp. Security should be an item on the agenda of every meeting related to camp management.
13. Whenever possible, travel with someone from the refugee community or host National Society when walking through the camp.
14. A hand-held radio should be carried with you and be ready for use at all times. Do not be careless and leave the radio lying around. Respect radio procedures. The radio is the number one security tool at your disposal. Avoid 'flashing' your radio and keep a low profile, since the presence of a radio is seen as a sign of authority (military, police or security forces) by many beneficiaries.

15. Avoid all disputes. It can be easy to get drawn into an argument or become associated with a dispute simply through close proximity. Never take sides.



16. Withdraw from the camp immediately if tensions rise in the camp, demonstrations occur or open conflict breaks out. Do not enter the camp before a security meeting has been held between representatives of the various partners and refugee community leaders.
17. Refugees are subject to the laws of the host country and you must not interfere with this process.
18. Clarification of our mandate and Red Cross and Red Crescent principles should be given to the law enforcement components responsible for guarding the camps. Seek respect for the 'No arms' policy in the camps.
19. Encourage the refugee community leaders to create a refugee watch that monitors activities and potential unrest inside the camps.
20. The International Federation or host National Society should not commit itself to assuming responsibility for protecting the refugee camp or guard duties. If necessary, the only form of guard system we should be involved in is guarding Red Cross and Red Crescent property and commodities. All guards employed should be trained in how to react and behave, as well as being introduced to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. If a reliable guard company is available, then this option should be considered rather than employing guards directly or using military or police forces.

## Distributions

Although this section focuses on distributions of relief goods to beneficiaries, the guidelines are applicable and relevant to any type of programme being implemented for beneficiaries and communities.



### Planning

A controlled and disciplined distribution starts with good planning, the selection of the right site, correct information, meeting the given expectations and good contacts with the beneficiaries and their leaders.

Many distributions go wrong because of expectations that are too high, poor communication and information, anger/frustration, or political agendas at work. Some of the most frequent triggers for problems during distributions are that beneficiaries have not been consulted with regard to the distribution or do not understand what is happening.

When distribution or assistance comes too late after a disaster has struck, or is not timed well, causing beneficiaries to have to wait for hours before the start of distribution, feelings of tension, frustration and anger are high.

Good planning can reduce many of these security risks. This is another reason for making sure that you have sufficient staff and volunteers on hand to conduct the distribution. You should avoid involving beneficiaries directly in the distribution.

### It's all about being proactive

The link between the implementation of programmes and security is an important area that is often overlooked – until a problem arises. Recent security incidents and tension between us and the local community or beneficiaries could all have been avoided.

- Incidents where roads are blocked, delegates or staff taken as 'hostages', warehouses and offices looted, staff stoned, violent and aggressive attitudes displayed, and camp riots erupt – all these and other security incidents have occurred because we did not recognize the value and importance of clearly explaining the process, implementation and progress of our work to the local authorities, community leaders or beneficiaries.
- One important proactive approach is to discuss with the beneficiaries when changes are foreseen in the implementation (delays, change in quality or quantity, different types of ration, etc.).
- Other ways of improving security involve putting more focus on the dissemination of who we are and what we are doing, and having a liaison officer to the local authorities or community leaders and beneficiaries in order to better interact with them.

### Managing information and expectations

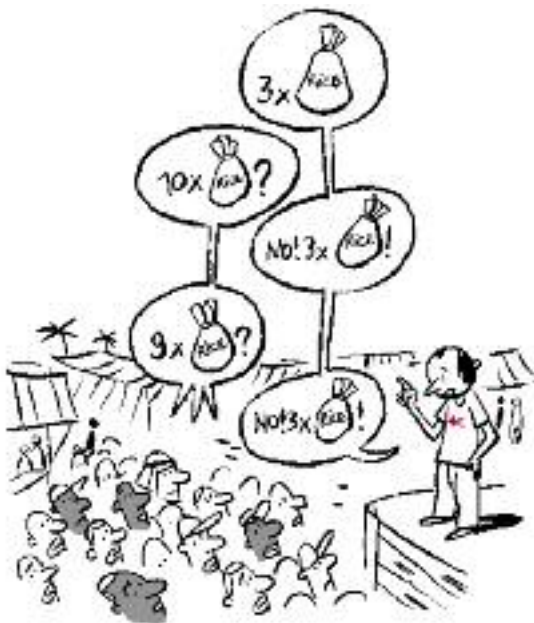
It is very important that the right information is given to the beneficiaries when it comes to what they will receive (rations, type of items to be distributed, quantity, who will receive what, type and size of shelter, etc.), to avoid creating unreasonable expectations.

Clear information should also be provided as to when, where and how you will conduct the distribution (time frame, order, discipline, locations, etc.).

Good information management will help to avoid confusion and frustration among beneficiaries. If you are unlikely to or cannot meet the promised time-frame – or provide the items or the quantity or quality required – you must

decide whether to postpone the distribution until you can meet expectations, or distribute what you have and explain that there will be a supplementary distribution later.

No matter what the decision is, any change in the distribution needs to be communicated to the beneficiaries to avoid creating frustration and anger. If any grievances, irregularities, theft, cheating or disorder occur, you need to deal with it quickly and correctly.



**Remember!** What you think you are saying is not as important as what the beneficiaries believe they are hearing. Misunderstandings may lead to insecurity and tensions.

### Pipeline and buffer stocks

When the International Federation is responsible for distribution, we need to ensure adequate control over the supply or pipeline of the items to be distributed. Even when delays or ruptures in the pipeline are not our fault, we are dealing directly with angry and frustrated beneficiaries. In most cases, their perceptions are that those conducting the distribution are the ones responsible for any shortages or delay.

In order to avoid these problems and to ensure a smooth relief operation, there is in most cases a need to have an emergency or buffer stock (ideally only a truck ride away). This will, in most cases, buy time to solve the pipeline problem or to find alternative solutions.

## Local contacts and understanding

It is important from the start to make sure that the community leaders (local authorities, village elders, village chiefs, etc.) that you are working with are recognized by the beneficiaries. Sometimes, ethnic, religious, tribal or political differences make it difficult to clearly understand who is who in the local community. This is a reason why community leaders should be present at the distribution points and be your primary 'tool' for troubleshooting.

The community leaders should be involved in arranging security and crowd controllers at the distribution sites and be held responsible if there are any problems. They should also be informed that if there are serious security problems, a lack of discipline or if the crowd gets out of control, the distributions will be stopped immediately.

The head of the local Red Cross or Red Crescent branch should also be present with you at all meetings with the community leaders and be present whenever delegates responsible for the distribution are at the site.



Make sure that there is a mechanism for the beneficiaries to address their confusion, problems or make comments. The community leaders should act as the 'front line' whenever there are disputes concerning unsatisfied beneficiaries.

The host National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society should always be involved in the communication phase and during the distributions. As mentioned, the National Society staff and community leaders should be involved at the first level of problem-solving; delegates should not get involved unless the situation demands it.

However, you should be informed about what is happening in and around the site and get an overview of problems, tensions, dissatisfaction and arguments. Avoid disputes and do not take sides.

### Site selection

The distribution site should be selected on the basis of security (i.e., evaluating the potential for crowd and access control and emergency exiting possibilities). For example, make sure there is sufficient space to avoid the beneficiaries being too crowded. There should also be external fencing (limits/borders) around the distribution site to facilitate access control and internal corridors or lanes to enable good discipline and the verification of ration cards and/or identification.

Make sure that your use of the site area is accepted both by the authorities and the landowner, and get this acceptance in writing.

The site should be close to a main access route – but not too close. It should be easy to reach the road for emergency relocation purposes, but far enough so as not to compromise the site's security and access control. If possible, the site should have several alternative access routes, ensuring that the site is also reachable in all weather conditions (rainy season, winter, etc.).

Be sure to check radio/telecommunications reception at the site in advance to make sure it is not in an area lacking coverage.

If you need water and electricity, make sure that you have access to them. Waste disposal, latrines and first-aid facilities should be near the distribution site and there should be plans in place to protect beneficiaries from the weather, including provision for shaded areas and shelter from wind and rain, etc.

## Site security

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In order to ensure security at the distribution site, follow these basic guidelines:

- Make sure that you have a secure parking area.
- Keep as little as possible of value at the site.
- Pay attention to what is going on inside and around the site as the earlier you spot problems and deal with them the better.
- Be familiar with the layout of the site, especially if your distribution is within a village or a camp.
- Avoid travelling alone and never stay at the site overnight.
- If the distribution takes place inside a camp, you must know your responsibilities within the security plan for the camp and the evacuation plan and guidelines for the execution of it, in particular.
- Make sure that the site is correctly identified with the appropriate logo or emblems.
- The team leader should at all times know how many delegates and local staff are at the site and their whereabouts.

## Access control

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How the beneficiaries access the site and how their status is verified must be organized well and in advance of the crowd's arrival. In order to do this:

- Make sure that you have selected an area where you have a good overview and where it is easy to maintain a disciplined form of access control and distribution.
- Make sure that the beneficiaries are aware of the access control system so that any unnecessary anger on their part can be minimized.
- Provide the controllers with training on how to conduct themselves towards the beneficiaries.
- Ensure that all delegates, staff and volunteers involved in the distribution are wearing clearly marked clothes, jackets or vests to facilitate their identification.
- Ensure there is sufficient space for all recipients to meet, to be checked (for their identification or right to receive assistance) and to be divided into smaller groups.
- Set up a corridor system (using plastic sheeting, fences, sticks, walls, etc.) to facilitate the task of channelling the beneficiaries through the distribution site in a disciplined way.

## Crowd control

In order to minimize disorder and maintain crowd control at distribution sites, the following guidelines should be applied:

- ❖ Emergency procedures and security signals or alerts must be in place and understood by all Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers at the site.
- ❖ Conduct a test run or practise the distribution, if possible, to get a feeling of whether everything is in place and right for the context.
- ❖ Good timing and flow are important to avoid frustration and anger, so try to avoid having huge crowds waiting in or around the distributions sites.
- ❖ Prepare shaded areas, latrines, water stands, and first-aid stations to maintain calm and order, especially if waiting is involved or distributions are expected to last a long time on account of complexity or the high number of items being distributed.
- ❖ Avoid any personal confrontations and use the community leaders or National Society staff to handle problems.
- ❖ In case of total breakdown, use the previously identified emergency exit with a vehicle and driver standing ready and knowing where to go, making sure that you do not leave any of your team behind.
- ❖ Aggression levels normally rise if you are caught trying to 'run away'. The crowd might take this as a sign of guilt or, at least, they can focus their anger on a specific target: you. So if you decide to make an emergency exit, be sure that you can get away. If not, consider staying put and trying to reason with the crowd and calm things down.



**Remember!** Be on the alert and maintain high security awareness. The quicker trouble can be identified and dealt with the better. Once a crowd gets out of control, it takes a lot of effort to calm the situation down. It is important to identify agitators or troublemakers and single them out and talk to them individually, away from the crowd.

## Emergency reaction

Handling or responding to emergencies at distribution sites is always a delicate undertaking, therefore:

- ❖ Avoid having security forces (police, military or private security) present at the distribution site, allowing community leaders, the local National Society's staff and the International Federation's delegates to provide the first level of crowd control.



- If or when the situation requires the use of security forces, do not position them at the distribution site, but keep them nearby and unarmed with the possibility of a more significant back-up.
- Make sure you correctly assess whether security personnel should remain low profile as a back-up, or highly visible as prevention; otherwise you will only escalate tensions as the presence of security forces can sometimes act as a destabilizing factor or may be seen as a provocation.
- Remember that in most cases you have little or no control over the security forces once they are involved in crowd control, although you may be held responsible for their actions.
- Hold a meeting with the local police, security forces, military leaders, etc., before any distribution, explaining our plans and trying to agree how to handle security incidents in a way that is in line with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- Make sure that you have direct contact with the most senior decision-maker/leader of the security forces in order to help you control the situation better.
- If the crowd and security situation gets out of control, the best thing to do may be to stop the distribution and leave the area under protection of the security forces, rather than staying and fighting or forcing the situation back under control.
- Make sure that the Code of Conduct has been disseminated to the security forces and all others involved with the distribution and with controlling the crowd.
- Confirm that the distribution and the use of security forces are compatible with the laws of the host country.



**T**he International Federation uses various telecommunications systems in the field, depending on the scope and nature of operations and the geographical features of the particular area. In terms of security, the efficient use of these systems facilitates access to information and allows for a proper overview of a situation and rapid reaction when needed. Communications equipment can therefore provide a lifeline for Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel and volunteers working in difficult environments.

This chapter is not intended to provide you with a lot of technical information on the different equipment used but rather to list the main systems used in Federation operations along with the advantages, disadvantages and some of the more common mistakes people make when using telecommunications equipment. Practical tips on the general use of some telecommunications equipment are also provided.

## The International Federation's communication system

The main role of a telecommunications system is for operational and security purposes, such as transmitting work-related information, to report on security incidents or to obtain information about a potentially risky situation.

### The key elements of the International Federation's telecommunications systems policy are:

- an appropriate system based on operational needs and terrain
- training of staff on the communications equipment issued to them and on the International Federation's telecommunications procedures
- having a redundancy (back-up) system in place

## Radios

### Very high frequency (VHF) radios

VHF is the most commonly used radio equipment in Federation field operations and most delegates have probably used a hand-held VHF radio at one time or another.

VHF radios are also fitted in many Federation vehicles and in delegation office premises. The radio is easy to use but, as with all other telecommunications equipment, the human factor is critical and most problems occur as a result of misuse by the user or a lack of training.

### Basic operation of a VHF radio

#### 1. Turning the radio on

Turn the upper left knob clockwise to turn the radio on and adjust the volume.

#### 2. Selecting a channel

Use the channel knob/buttons to select the correct channel.

#### 3. Push-to-talk

Press the push-to-talk (PTT) button and wait for one second before you start talking.

## Vehicle-fitted unit



## Hand-held VHF unit



### How VHF signals travel

VHF radio waves travel in what is known as a direct wave. What this means is that the radio wave of a VHF radio travels in a straight line and usually as far as the line of sight. Basically, this means that if you are looking through binoculars at the spot you want to make contact with, you should be able to communicate to that point with the VHF radio. Since VHF waves travel in straight lines, any obstacles between the location you are transmitting from and the destination will affect the range.

Geographical features such as hills, mountains, forests and other obstacles such as buildings will absorb or reflect the signal and, thereby, block reception between you and the intended receiver. Such barriers can also create a phenomenon known as a blind spot in which the radio waves are absorbed and/or reflected from the spot where you are stand-



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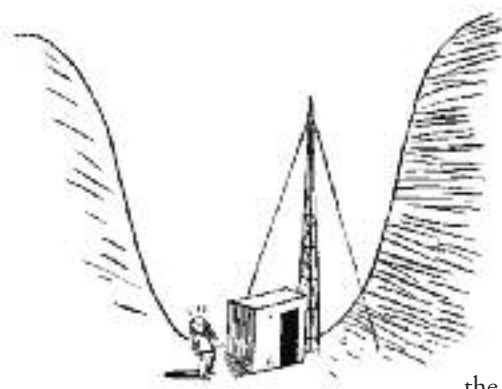
ing. All you may need to do is move a few metres away from that spot until a signal is established. This means you may have to move around in order to establish the best possible communication. Also, remember that VHF radio waves travel in straight lines so you need to reach a high enough point where there are few physical obstacles between you and the area you want to communicate with.

## Antennas

The range of any VHF network is heavily dependent on the height of the antennas. Since VHF radio waves travel in straight lines and over a distance that one can see (line of sight), all transmissions depend on the height of the antenna and where it is sited. If you are in a valley, the mountains surrounding this location will affect the ability of the waves to travel beyond them. Therefore, antennas need to be placed at the highest possible point, such as on top of buildings or at the highest point in your area (e.g., at the top of a hill).

Under ideal conditions, a VHF radio signal between two vehicles or between a vehicle and a base station can travel up to 20 kilometres, depending on the topography of the area, the height of the antenna and power of transmission.

The contact range between hand-held radios is shorter than that between vehicles or between a vehicle and a base station because of the power of transmission and the size of the antenna. The range between two hand-held VHF radios is usually about five kilometres in ideal conditions.



The same applies to antennas on hand-held radios as with other VHF radio units – the most ideal conditions present themselves the higher up you are when using the radio with as few obstacles as possible between you and the intended receiver.

In order to increase the range of VHF radios and their coverage, it is possible to set up relay antennas (repeaters). These boost radio coverage to wider areas and over high obstacles such as mountainous areas that might otherwise block the signals. A relay station is basically an antenna in which the signal from your VHF radio goes to the relay station (situated in an advantageous point within range), which then repeats the signal to another relay station and so forth until it reaches the destination (which can be located a long distance away). If, for some reason, one of these relay stations does not function properly or is damaged, then the whole relay system will not function, no signals will be repeated onwards and no connection will be established. Relay stations are especially vulnerable to natural hazards, e.g., earthquakes.

### Batteries

Radios will operate only as long as their batteries are charged so it is critical to keep batteries charged at all times. During a crisis, when it may be difficult to recharge batteries, radio use must be restricted and managed to preserve battery life and allow the station to remain on the air as long as possible. In such a situation, fixed time periods should be set for sending and receiving messages, with the radio otherwise switched off to preserve battery life. As a user, you should always bear in mind that batteries discharge at a much faster rate when radios are transmitting as opposed to when they are receiving.

### Advantages of using VHF radios

- » easy to use and user-friendly
- » hand-held units are small and portable
- » can be replaced easily if lost or stolen
- » provide communication 24 hours a day, seven days a week, given that someone is monitoring the network
- » coverage can be extended with repeaters

### Disadvantages of using VHF radios

- » requires registration and frequency licensing in each individual country
- » hand-held units can be easily lost or stolen
- » communication can be easily monitored or jammed by a third party
- » limited battery life
- » coverage is limited
- » coverage is easily affected by geographical features

## Common mistakes/problems when using VHF radios

- attempting to transmit while in an unsuitable location such as in a valley or dead spot (can be corrected by moving around to obtain better conditions)
- low battery level
- no spare batteries to hand
- the antenna on base stations is not properly sited (e.g., being placed inside a concrete building rather than outside on a high vantage point)



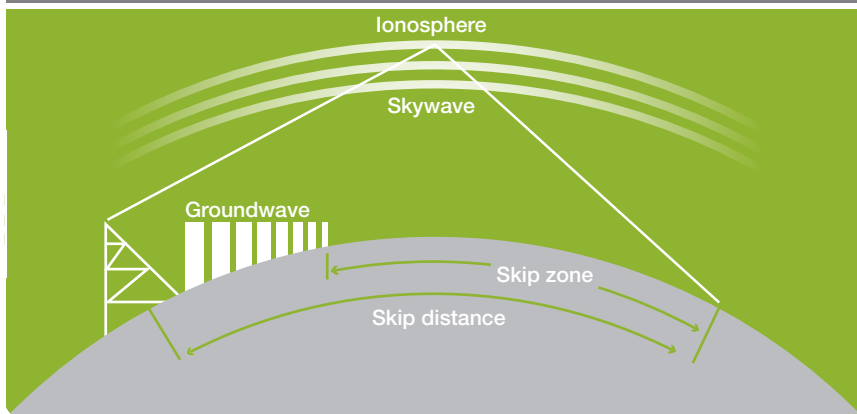
**Remember!** When at home, keep the handset close by and on at a sufficient volume – particularly at night.

## High frequency (HF) radios

HF radio waves can travel much longer distances than VHF radio and the transmission distance is much less affected or limited by the geographical features of the landscape than VHF radio transmissions. High frequency radio signals can, in perfect conditions, travel over thousands of kilometres. However, because HF radio waves consist of a combination of ground waves (direct line of sight) and sky waves (reflected by atmospheric layers), 'skip' or silent zones occur where neither ground waves nor sky waves can be received (see illustration). The skip zone normally occurs between 15 and 50 kilometres from the transmission site and, within this area, communication may be very difficult. Ground waves may not travel very far, especially in mountainous areas.

The main HF radio used in the International Federation's operations is the Codan brand, which has many specific functions and is, in many ways, modelled on a mobile phone with many of its features.

## High frequency (HF) radios



The aim of this section is not to teach you how to use the Codan radio, but to emphasize that there are many features related to the Codan that you need to be aware of, and that you should request proper training from the delegation if issued with or expected to use any communications equipment.

HF radios are usually not portable and are generally mounted in vehicles or in base stations and, unlike VHF radios, the HF radio is less affected by the user's lack of knowledge but more by solar activity. Therefore, quality of reception can vary depending on the time of day and can also differ between days. These are factors that are out of your control but you should familiarize yourself with the radio coverage in your area of operation by mapping out potential spots where the coverage is inadequate. This is done by conducting radio checks while travelling in the field and marking on a map those areas where there are blind spots or no reception.

### Advantages of using HF radios

- » short- to extremely long-range communication possible without relay stations
- » less affected by geographical features such as mountains and forests
- » easy to network by having multiple stations sharing a frequency
- » requires limited maintenance
- » possible to integrate with other networks
- » selective calling function proves a link was established (as it has call features similar to mobile phones)

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## Disadvantages of using HF radios

- requires registration and frequency licensing in each individual country
- full-time radio operator needed for adequate message handling
- voice messages easily monitored or intercepted by third parties
- transmission strength varies at various times of the day due to solar activity
  - something that is out of the user's control

### Radio room

The term 'radio room' is often used when referring to the country delegation's operational communications centre. All delegations and Federation offices must establish a system or procedures to monitor delegates' field movements. In larger operations, this can be done by establishing a radio room with radio room operators. In small delegations, it could be someone in the administration office who is responsible for monitoring field movement. The most important thing to remember is that someone else in the delegation should always be aware of where you are and have the means to communicate with you.

## Federation call sign management

A call sign is a unique designation for a transmitting station – usually a combination of letters and numbers – that is assigned to it for the purpose of identification over the air.

The International Federation has specific guidelines for developing radio network call signs and their management. The guidelines are applicable to emergency operations, delegations, programmes and country wide networks of the International Federation and its member National Societies. Please contact the International Federation's IT/telecommunications unit for details.

The purpose of this standardized approach is to improve coordination and cooperation between the International Federation and its members, ICRC, UN agencies and other non-governmental organizations.

The guidelines should be applied in all Federation radio networks in order to improve cooperation between Movement partners in radio communications, although a certain amount of flexibility is acceptable due to the diversity of the usage of the radio networks. This flexibility also allows sensitive phonetic letters (e.g., India, Whiskey) to be changed in certain circumstances.



**Remember!** These guidelines do not overrule any country regulations governing the usage of call signs. If a specific call sign code must be used in the country, either specified in its laws or specifically in the licence granted, it must be used as a call sign or can be added in front of the call signs specified in these guidelines.

## General procedures for radio transmissions

### Basic radio procedures require

- **discipline** – listen before transmitting
- **brevity** – be brief and to the point
- **rhythm** – use short, complete phrases that make sense
- **speed** – do not speak too fast or too slowly
- **volume** – do not shout
- **preparation** – plan and know what you are going to say before transmitting

### How to speak into a radio

The radio is equipped with a push-to-talk button which switches the radio from the listening mode to the transmitting mode. As you cannot listen to radio traffic when transmitting, a proper handling of this button is essential.

- Be sure your radio is set to the appropriate channel in the appropriate mode.
- Listen for at least five seconds to avoid interfering with an existing communication.
- Press the push-to-talk button then transmit your message.
- The microphone should be approximately five centimetres from your mouth. Speak clearly and not too quickly.
- Release the push-to-talk button when you have finished speaking.

### International spelling code

This spelling code, recognized and used internationally, was initially created for air traffic control purposes. It is used to spell a name (location or city, name of a person or required item, etc.) over a radio link with a minimum risk of transmission errors.

Alpha	November
Bravo	Oscar
Charlie	Papa
Delta	Quebec
Echo	Romeo
Foxtrot	Sierra
Golf	Tango
Hotel	Uniform
India	Victor
Juliet	Whiskey
Kilo	X-Ray
Lima	Yankee
Mike	Zulu

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The name to be spelt is first pronounced, and then spelt. For example, “report incident to Geneva, Golf, Echo, November, Echo, Victor, Alpha”. Figures are always pronounced separately. For example, 683 is transmitted as “six, eight, three”.

## Procedure words (pro-words)

A pro-word is a word or a phrase that has been given a certain meaning in order to standardize and speed up the handling of messages. The authorized pro-words used by the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the UN and other organizations are as follows:

<b>Affirmative</b>	You are correct, or your transmission is correct.
<b>Break</b>	Indicates a separation of the text from other portions of the message.
<b>Correction</b>	An error in the transmission, I will continue from the last correct word.
<b>I say again</b>	I am repeating my transmission.
<b>Message</b>	A message to follow: prepare to copy or record it.
<b>Out</b>	Transmission to you is finished and no answer is required.
<b>Over</b>	End of transmission, your response is expected. Go ahead.
<b>Read back</b>	Repeat this entire transmission.
<b>Roger</b>	I have received and understood your message.
<b>Speak slower</b>	You are transmitting too fast, I am having difficulty copying.
<b>This is</b>	Give your call sign, e.g., “Bravo mobile”.
<b>Wait</b>	I must pause for a few seconds, please wait.
<b>Wait out</b>	I must pause longer than a few seconds, please wait.
<b>Wrong</b>	Your last transmission was incorrect, the correct version is.
<b>Standby</b>	Do not transmit until contacted but do not close down.

Bear in mind that the radio is not a secure means of communication since it can be monitored by practically anyone. Never transmit military or specific, security-related information over it. Inform briefly about the situation if it affects your mission, such as: “team halted”, “team allowed to proceed”, “team will return” or “team needs assistance”. A detailed report should be given to your country representative once you arrive at your destination, either in person or over the telephone.

## Remember

- Follow instructions.
- Always assume others are listening.
- Radios will not increase your security, as such: only their proper use will.
- Do not use the radio for social traffic/calls.
- Never use the radio to convey military or security information.

## Mobile telephones

In today's operations, the most commonly used communications equipment is the mobile or cellular telephone. Most delegates are very familiar with their use so there is little need to discuss them in detail. However, there are some considerations that need to be borne in mind:

- ❖ Mobile telephone infrastructure, such as relay stations and antennas, are vulnerable to damage caused by natural disasters and Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel working in affected or high-risk areas should always have back-up communications equipment.
- ❖ Mobile phone networks are often unreliable in developing countries, especially in times of emergency, and get easily overloaded in times of crisis.
- ❖ In areas where there is armed conflict or when there are visits by very important visitors, the local authorities may turn off the network.
- ❖ Most Federation-issued mobile phones in the field are prepaid, so always check the credit status before leaving on any field trips.

## Satellite communications

There are many different types of satellite communications equipment on the market, but the most commonly used by the International Federation include Thuraya satellite phones, Mini-M satellite phones, Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) and Global Positioning System (GPS).

BGAN, which is provided by the Inmarsat telecommunications company, is basically a satellite-based internet provider that enables the user to connect to the internet in most parts of the world. The advantage of BGAN over other satellite internet systems is that, as the terminal used is the size of a large laptop, it is portable and can be set up in any location with a direct view of the satellite. This means the user can, for example, obtain an internet connection in the middle of the desert via a satellite uplink. The BGAN terminal can also come equipped with a handset that can be used for voice transmissions – just like other satellite telephones.

GPS uses a satellite global positioning device that can receive signals from a number of orbiting satellites, allowing the user to determine, among other things, the receiver's exact location, speed, elevation and direction.

The GPS position is retrieved through a satellite connection, so the unit must have a clear line of sight to the satellite.

When turned on, the unit must connect to at least three satellites to get its position. This process can take up to ten minutes. In some operations, GPS has become an invaluable tool and is currently widely used by members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to help it implement numerous programmes.

### Satellite phones

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The International Federation mainly uses three types of satellite phone: Thuraya, Iridium and Inmarsat. All of the telephone handsets used are able to transmit both data and voice signals but, as with any communications equipment, proper training is essential before their use.

### Satellite connection

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Calls can be placed only when the satellite is in direct line of sight, i.e., when the sky is visible from the handset. If using external antennas placed outside, then most phones can be used indoors provided the antenna placed outside has a clear view to the sky (always seek information about the use of the phone issued to you).

In general, placing a call from the handset is similar to using a normal mobile phone. However, all numbers dialled – including in-country numbers and others – must include the country code. Special codes are used when placing a call between two satellite phones.

### Coverage

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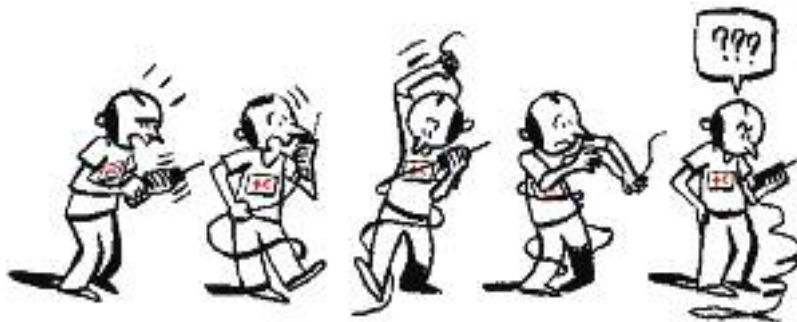


It is a common misconception that all satellite phones can receive signals and be used anywhere in the world. Thuraya and Iridium operate their own satellite communications networks, while Nera uses services from the satellite provider Inmarsat. However, only Nera and Iridium have global coverage. At the moment, Thuraya does not cover large parts of east Asia and southern Africa.

While Thuraya and Iridium have small and portable hand-held phones, Nera phones look more like bulky landline phones and are generally used indoors in office

premises with external antennas placed outside the building. New, portable, hand-held Inmarsat phones are coming onto the market.

All satellite phones have advantages and disadvantages depending on need. It is therefore vital that the correct type of phone is selected, depending on the country you are in. It is highly recommended that users visit the web sites of their satellite providers for updated information on their areas of coverage.



Information on the correct use of all Federation-issued IT and telecommunications equipment can be found by logging on to either FedNet or DMIS (Disaster Management Information System).

## Important points to bear in mind about satellite communications

- **Expensive:** Satellite calls can be very expensive, depending on whether the user is calling another satellite phone, landline or a mobile number.
- **Prepaid:** Because the calls are expensive, make sure you always have enough credit to make emergency calls. Calls can cost up to US\$ 10 per minute so a credit of US\$ 5 is obviously not enough.
- **Personal Identification Number (PIN):** Be aware that the phone you have been issued with may need a PIN to activate the keyboard.
- **Connection cut:** The satellite service providers for each system (Nera, Iridium and Inmarsat) can turn off the connection so no signal can be reached in your area. This is not common, but governments can request that the provider blocks out signals in certain areas within their country because of military activity or visits by very important people (dignitaries, high-ranking government officials, diplomats, etc.) to your area.
- **Outdoors:** Satellite phones need a clear view to the sky and connection is almost impossible to establish indoors unless you have an external antenna. Standing and leaning outside a window is not recommended, and connections under such circumstances can easily be lost.
- **Attractive for thieves:** Satellite phones and other communications equipment are easy to misplace and are attractive targets for criminals. Remember that a loss of a satellite phone or any piece of communications equipment can easily hinder operations and, in some places, take a long time to replace.
- **GPS:** Some satellite phones such as Thuraya have an inbuilt GPS device but, in conflict zones, local authorities sometimes ban their use to protect their military operations.



Field managers should always be aware of their colleagues' mental well-being; anyone who is skipping meals, becoming isolated, withdrawing from regular activities – these are all signs of sinking spirits. All staff need regular, positive feedback, scheduled days off and recognition for the work they are doing. You should

also remember that a delegate is more likely to perform better on the job, acclimatize to the new environment and cope well with stress if you have provided him or her with a comprehensive briefing.

Once equipped with the necessary knowledge and protective measures against the threats posed by international fieldwork, delegates will feel more secure on the job in their new environment and will know how they are expected to behave and carry out their work in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Delegates should be aware that psychological support is always available to them through a support team based in Geneva, comprising two stress counsellors and the Federation secretariat's human resources (HR) health officer. These professionals can be contacted at any time by phone, fax or e-mail. Contact the Federation secretariat HR department for up-to-date contact numbers.

## What are the health risks?

### Risks

- cumulative stress
- malaria
- food and water-borne diseases
- insect and vector-borne diseases
- exacerbation of chronic diseases
- accidents
- injuries
- risky behaviour

The main health hazards while on mission are:

- stomach upsets and food poisoning
- malaria and dengue infection
- stress
- sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV
- excessive smoking, excessive alcohol consumption and other substance abuse

Staff risky behaviour can easily result in catastrophic consequences for the individual staff member and negatively affect others. Casual and unprotected sex, increased alcohol consumption, working long hours, and not observing customs and traditions in the host country are all increase the staff's vulnerability to other risk factors.

## Before a mission

No delegate is allowed to commence his or her mission before undergoing a thorough medical check-up and receiving medical clearance that he or she is physically and mentally fit to go on mission. The International Federation or the contracting National Society must furthermore ensure their staff have personal insurance coverage for:

- » sickness
- » accident
- » air travel
- » war risk (applicable in countries with security risks)
- » luggage and personal effects (up to a limited amount and excluding valuable items)
- » medical repatriation or evacuation

Delegates contracted directly by the International Federation are insured by the Federation secretariat. All delegates contracted by a Participating National Society and coming under the International Federation's security umbrella, or who are seconded to the International Federation, should have full insurance coverage prior to their deployment in the field.

Medical and dental check-ups are also common sense requirements for all delegates about to set out on mission.

It is highly recommended that all delegates or those working for the International Federation, a National Society or as volunteers in the field receive first-aid training prior to fieldwork. They will be better prepared to provide assistance to any injured person – a basic Red Cross and Red Crescent service. Information on on-line first-aid training can be found at [www.ifrc.org/what/health/firstaid/tools.asp](http://www.ifrc.org/what/health/firstaid/tools.asp).

## Immunization

Delegates should be immunized against diseases prevalent in the country of assignment. Common diseases for which delegates may be immunized include diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis, typhoid fever, hepatitis A and B, yellow fever, meningitis and Japanese B encephalitis.

Some African countries require vaccination against yellow fever for persons and delegates working in Africa, while the same vaccination is recommended for

South America. The hepatitis B vaccine is especially recommended for health professionals coming into contact with blood products. Vaccination against rabies for delegates who are likely to come into contact with potentially infected animals is strongly recommended. See also the World Health Organization's web site at [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) for up-to-date information on schedules for individual vaccines.

## During a mission

The following actions should be taken upon your arrival at the delegation:

- Hand in all relevant insurance information to the administration delegate or country representative, including the name and address of your insurance provider and a 24-hour contact number.
- Advise of any relevant medical problems and prescribed medication.
- Provide information about blood type.

It is the responsibility of the delegation to keep all personal insurance documents in a central place, and to ensure that the information can be easily accessed at any time.

All delegates must receive a health briefing upon arrival at the delegation. The briefing should at least cover the following:

- the provision of a list of 24-hour emergency telephone contact numbers, including whom to contact in the delegation in case of emergency, contact numbers of local emergency services and referral health clinics/hospitals, including dental services and ambulance services, if applicable
- information about the main health problems in the country or region and specific preventative measures to be taken
- an explanation of the delegation's medical evacuation plan and procedures that are a mandatory component of its security plan
- stress identification tips and management (as applicable to the context)

An end-of-mission medical check-up is highly recommended for all delegates and is valid for any forthcoming mission within the next six months.

## Basic health precautions in the field

### Hygiene

In warm climates the skin can easily become the seat of fungal or other infections as a result of profuse perspiration. Daily showers are recommended, followed by thorough drying. You may consider taking talcum powder with you to hot climate areas.

The water used for oral and dental hygiene should be purified or boiled beforehand; if in doubt, bottled water should be used.

In tropical climates, wear long-sleeved clothes that are light-coloured and apply mosquito repellent to exposed areas of the skin to reduce the risk of disease transmitted by mosquitoes. In cold climates, make sure you wear appropriately warm clothing so that your extremities (feet, hands, nose and ears) are well covered and protected. Remember always to take into consideration the local culture and clothing – especially in Muslim countries.

### Food

Food should always be thoroughly cooked and served while hot. Raw vegetables and fruit should be washed with filtered or boiled water. Once it has been prepared or cooked, food should not be eaten the following day unless it has been kept in a well-functioning refrigerator.

In tropical climates, avoid cold buffets, ham, salami, as well as mayonnaise, mayonnaise-based dressing or custards and creams made with eggs. Avoid any type of raw or undercooked meat or shellfish, and make sure that eggs are well cooked.

When eating out while travelling, choose a busy restaurant and fully cooked and popular local dishes with a high turnover. You should also avoid ordering salads.

Stay away from ice cream from unreliable sources or of doubtful quality. Do not put ice cubes into your drinks unless you are sure they were made with safe drinking-water.



**Remember! If you can't peel it, don't eat it.**

## Water

Before drinking water, make sure it has been boiled, filtered or disinfected. When using water filters, remember to clean them regularly as indicated in the instructions.

Remember to carry an adequate amount of safe drinking-water with you whenever you travel to the field. Soft drinks and bottled or otherwise packaged fruit juices and other drinks are safe, but ice should be avoided as it is only as safe as the water it has been prepared from. Hot tea and coffee are usually safe. Milk should be avoided if not pasteurized. Increase your intake of water in hot climates, whenever you have diarrhoea or fever, and after strenuous activity.

## Sun exposure

Exposure to the ultraviolet rays of the sun can cause severe skin damage, especially in people with fair complexions. You will adjust more easily if you expose yourself gradually wear a hat suitable clothing and sunglasses, and use sunscreen with a high sun protection factor. Strong sunlight and heat can cause severe sunstroke. Remember to drink enough fluids. The use of oral rehydration salts (ORS) tablets is recommended in extremely hot environments.



## Swimming

In regions where bilharzias (also known as schistosomiasis) is endemic, it is advisable not to bathe in fresh water and to avoid prolonged contact with stagnant or slow-moving water (including rivers, lakes, marshy pools, etc.). The parasites that cause the disease enter the body through the skin. With regard to communicable diseases in general, the only safe bathing places are chlorinated swimming pools.

While bathing in the sea involves no risk of disease, it can be very dangerous for other reasons (e.g., the presence of jellyfish, sharks, etc.). Be especially alert for rip currents. Before going swimming anywhere find out whether conditions are safe. There have been a number of fatalities involving Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel in recent years due to drowning. Never swim alone.

## Sex and sexually transmitted diseases

In the course of your field mission it is possible that you will find yourself in high-risk situations with regard to HIV. There are various reasons for this: the absence of those you normally rely on for emotional support (family or partner), the need to unwind and work off tension, disillusionment and frustration, and alcohol abuse (which can inhibit protective reflexes). People on long-term missions generally find themselves in situations where all these factors are interconnected, and this tends to make them less vigilant.

Your risk of exposure to HIV is not a question of where you work (as there is no part of the world that has not been affected by HIV/AIDS), but what you do. HIV prevalence in adults aged between 15 and 49 years is over 15 per cent in southern Africa, while among prostitutes in some African cities it is 80 per cent. Sexual abstinence, remaining faithful to a partner you are sure of and safe sex are the only ways to avoid HIV. High-quality condoms provide good protection. They also protect you from hepatitis B, other sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia), viral infections and mycoses, and help prevent unwanted pregnancies. Remember that good judgement tends to diminish under the influence of alcohol.



**Remember!** The use of sex trade workers by Federation staff is prohibited by the Code of Conduct.

## Animals and insects

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Animals in general tend to avoid human beings; but they may attack, particularly if they are with their young. In many developing countries, dogs are the main vector or carrier of infectious agents. In areas of endemic rabies, domestic dogs and cats should not be petted, while contact with wild animals should be avoided. Snakes will usually try to escape rather than attack. There is a high probability of being bitten if you step on one. Please refer to the section below on snake bites for more details.

## Diseases carried by mosquitoes

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### Malaria

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Malaria is a serious and sometimes fatal disease which is widespread in many tropical and subtropical countries. It develops after someone is bitten by an infected mosquito that carries the malaria parasites in its saliva.

Malaria occurs in over 100 countries and more than 40 per cent of people in the world are at risk. Large areas of Central and South America, Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, South-East Asia and Oceania are considered at high risk of the disease.

### Precautions

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- Be aware of the level of risk of malaria in the country you are working in or travelling to.
- Avoid being bitten by mosquitoes by taking precautions, including:
  - using repellents containing the chemical DEET
  - using mosquito coils
  - wearing appropriate clothing that covers exposed areas
- Take medicine (prophylaxis) such as:
  - Doxycycline
  - Lariam
  - Malarone
- Early diagnosis of symptoms, which appear following travel to a malaria-risk region, is vital. Malaria can be fatal but, if diagnosed early, treatment is usually very effective.

Any traveller who becomes ill with a fever or flu-like illness while travelling – and up to one year after returning home – should immediately seek professional medical advice. You should tell your general physician that you have been travelling in a malaria-risk area.

Malaria can be cured with prescription drugs. The type of drugs and length of treatment depend on the kind of malaria diagnosed, where the patient was infected, the age of the patient and how severely ill the patient was at the start of treatment.

### Dengue fever

Dengue fever is a viral disease caused by the dengue virus and transmitted by mosquitoes. Dengue mosquitoes are more active in the daytime – unlike those carrying the malaria parasites.

Symptoms of dengue fever include sudden fever, headache, bleeding, skin rash, joint and muscular pain, and retro-orbital pain.

The same precautions should be applied as when trying to avoid malaria, keeping in mind one important difference: no vaccine or prophylaxis exists for dengue fever. It is therefore vital that you take the protective measures listed in the section above.

Other infectious diseases transmitted by mosquitoes that are relatively common in some parts of the world include Japanese B encephalitis and chikungunya.

### Snake bites

Most snakes are nocturnal and can be avoided by not walking at night in dark, swampy and bushy areas. Keeping your garden or yard clear of thick vegetation, tall grass, and dark, rocky hideaways will help discourage snakes from taking up residence at your home or office. Be careful of scorpions, spiders and insects. Do not walk around barefoot. It is highly recommended that you wear long boots, especially when walking across grass fields and forests. Use a torch in the dark so that you always know where you are stepping. Remember to always check your shoes before putting them on.

## First-aid treatment for snake bites

- If possible, take a picture of the snake or memorize its appearance for identification purposes.
- Reassure the person (or yourself) that most snake bites are painful but harmless, and gently assist them into a comfortable position, keeping the bitten area lower than the heart.
- Keep the general atmosphere calm, and observe the person closely, noting the times when symptoms, if any, appear.
- Bandage the affected area to immobilize it, if possible. However, using a tourniquet, cutting the wound or sucking out the poison is *not* recommended.
- Give the person sips of cool water and note any difficulty with swallowing.
- Notify the health coordinator or the health delegate *immediately*. They will decide whether the person is to be evacuated or whether a doctor will fly in with antivenom and treat the person on the spot.

## First-aid kits

A first-aid kit should be located in each office and residence. The delegation must appoint a competent staff member whose task is to ensure that the kit is regularly updated and contains the necessary items, according to need.



## First-aid knowledge

All delegates are expected to have basic knowledge of first aid and some training in techniques before arriving in the field.

One of the mandates of the International Federation and all of its member National Societies is to provide first-aid training to the public, and to work as an auxiliary service to each country's armed forces during times of emergency or conflict. It is therefore paramount that all Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel have the basic skills to live up to our mandate.

There is probably no worse advertisement for the Movement than identifiable Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel being unable to assist injured victims due to a lack of first-aid skills.

Bear in mind that if people do not know how to use first-aid kits, they will be of little or no use no matter how well they are stocked or how many there are.

It is recommended that each delegate has his or her own personal medical kit for basic first aid and minor health problems. The kit should include: bandages, medicines (for headaches, infections, etc.), sterile syringes and needles, a malaria self-test kit, disinfectant, oral rehydration salts, condoms, thermometer and talcum powder.

### First-aid kits in vehicles

It should be noted that, in most countries, car accidents are the most common cause of hospital admission for staff.

Every Federation vehicle must contain an appropriately stocked first-aid kit; it is a compulsory requirement. It is important that each kit has user instructions, both in English and in the local language.

Basic first-aid training should be provided for all staff in the delegation, including local drivers.

### Trauma kits

These kits should be located in isolated areas where medical facilities are not readily available. They are intended to be used by a medical doctor or a skilled emergency

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room nurse. Among other things, each kit contains: infusions, bandages, burn dressings and a suture kit. For details of the contents, speak to the health coordinator or the health delegate. Further information is also available in the International Federation's emergency items catalogue, published by the logistics department.

The trauma kit should be checked every two months to ensure that all items are in sufficient supply and are replenished as necessary.

The trauma kit allows an injured person to be treated and to have their condition stabilized on the spot while awaiting transport to a referral hospital for treatment. The location where they are treated should be as clean and as cool as possible, and close to a helipad or airport. The location, however, is not as important as the skill of the person treating the injury. Each manager in the field should know the names and contact details of doctors or skilled nurses in the operational area, and how to contact them 24 hours a day.

## Medical evacuation plans

### General considerations

Each head of office or country representative should be aware of any non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in the same area and any expertise that may be available. For example, the UN and NGOs such as Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) often have doctors among their staff who would be able to assist if there were an accident late in the evening or at a remote field location.

Field managers should be thoroughly familiar with medical evacuation procedures as accidents can occur at any time, and they are responsible for the process. It is important to be familiar with the procedures for people in need of a visa. Discuss this with the delegates in your team. Remember that a serious illness does not exempt anyone from needing a visa.

If a person is sick but the situation is not an emergency and the manager in the field is not sure whether to evacuate or not, he or she should consult with the health delegate, country representative and HR health officer at the Federation secretariat in Geneva for advice.

Each delegation is required to have medical evacuation procedures. The medical evacuation plan outlining these procedures must:

- » include an assessment of medical facilities in each area of operations, including services provided and the availability of ambulance services
- » identify the nearest location and access to safe blood and a post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kit
- » clearly state division of responsibilities
- » be coordinated, accurate and contain appropriate information (i.e., follow the guidelines, avoid developing your own solutions and remember that most of the people involved do not speak English as a first language)
- » be updated, checked regularly and shared with all delegates
- » make provisions based on whether the patient is fit to be moved
- » make provisions based on whether the patient is fit to fly

### Air ambulances

The International Federation's official medical evacuation assistance partner is SOS International, the largest medical emergency ambulance service worldwide. SOS has a number of health clinics and cooperates with a range of highly respected hospitals in various countries worldwide.

Before the head of delegation contacts SOS, the patient's insurance company needs to be contacted to authorize payment of the costs involved. Despite the urgency of the situation, if you react without the prior approval of the insurance company, then it might not reimburse payment. The head of delegation can, in extreme situations, decide to go ahead with the medical evacuation before or without obtaining the insurance company's approval.

Once you have received approval from the insurance provider, make sure you have the following details ready before contacting the air ambulance service:

- » the place the patient is to be evacuated from and the place they are to be evacuated to (capital city, neighbouring country, third country)
- » name, age, sex and nationality of the patient
- » reasons for evacuation request (e.g., severe illness, accident, etc.)
- » details of the patient's condition
- » the physician's name and contact number, if the patient is already in hospital

In case of medical evacuation from the field to the capital city or to a neighbouring country, be aware of the time required for the patient to reach the airstrip.

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This information is required if the flying time of the air ambulance is less than the time needed to reach the airstrip by road.

Before the ambulance arrives, make sure you have the patient's passport and vaccination card ready in addition to the insurance card, if possible.

### Categories of medical evacuation

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The two types of medical evacuation you will generally encounter in the field are:

1. Medical repatriation or relocation – This involves transporting the patient by commercial airline to his or her home country or a third country for treatment. Medical relocation involves non-life-threatening situations.
2. Emergency medical evacuation (also referred to as medevac) – The second type is a medical evacuation, with urgency when a person is seriously ill or injured. This person cannot travel alone and should be accompanied.

Although the two situations are very different, some common rules apply:

- The senior field manager must be informed of the situation immediately.
- The health delegate (if one is assigned to the delegation) and the Geneva-based HR health officer must also be informed and consulted for advice.
- The evacuee must travel with their passport, police registration and any other available identification documents.
- A card or a letter from the International Federation/delegation proving that the evacuee is covered by health insurance must accompany the person.
- Documentation describing the illness or accident, and any treatment given to date, should also accompany the patient.
- Anyone who is seriously ill must always be accompanied during the evacuation.

### Steps in the medical evacuation process

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1. In case of severe illness or injury, the delegate should be admitted as soon as possible to a reputable hospital (identified as part of the security planning process).
2. If the illness or injury takes place in the field, inform the country representative immediately. If the condition of the delegate is severe and does not allow for road transport, the country representative can request evacuation

by air. At field level, the country representative has the final responsibility in ordering an evacuation based on the written information that he or she receives from the treating physician or, when no medical doctor is available, from any health professional dealing with the case.

The country representative will inform the HR health officer or the duty officer at the Federation secretariat in Geneva of events, in accordance with security regulations. The country representative will also provide the name and contact telephone number of the treating physician/health professional (if possible). The SOS alarm centre in Geneva (or the nearest one) should be contacted directly by the country representative if it concerns a Federation-contracted delegate or family member or local/national staff member. SOS International will contact the HR health officer to coordinate.

3. It is the responsibility of the person contacted at the Federation secretariat in Geneva to forward the information to all relevant parties.
4. It is the responsibility of the HR health officer to inform the delegate's National Society, which will then contact the next of kin and the insurance company.
5. The insurance company will directly contact the treating physician and agree on the modality of evacuation (by commercial flight with or without an escort or air ambulance).
6. The country representative will be the point of contact for the HR health officer for any update on the delegate's health status and evacuation.
7. In extreme emergencies, where immediate action is required and the situation is deemed one of life or death by a physician in the field, the country representative will take the appropriate steps to ensure the immediate evacuation of the delegate. If normal airlines cannot be used and the insurance company cannot be contacted, the country representative can authorize the charter of a special aircraft to the nearest location for adequate medical treatment. The health officer will then be advised of progress.

The following flow chart summarizes the main steps to be taken in the event of a medical evacuation.

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## Factors supporting the medical evacuation process

- well-coordinated, accurate and appropriate information
- calm, cooperative atmosphere
- assistance offered at the bedside; ideally, someone with a health professional background
- cooperative and encouraging approach towards hospital staff and medical evacuation team

## Steps in the medical



### Hospital/emergency room, or other place

#### Treating doctor

assist  
calm down  
ensure care, company  
and communication of patient

#### Evacuation

find and give information  
wait for advice and orders  
pack passport, medicines

## Factors jeopardizing the medical evacuation process

- ❖ uncoordinated information channels, confusing information through various sources, unnecessary update requests from supervisors, colleagues and friends
- ❖ too many people involved in the process
- ❖ emotions running high and established procedures not adhered to
- ❖ parallel, unauthorized arrangements, which can make the insurance company withdraw from the process and payment

## evacuation process

Head of delegation/  
deputy head of delegation  
Others?

Secretariat headquarters,  
Geneva:  
- National Society  
- family

Head  
of delegation

Medevac company  
(SOS International)

Insurance company



Receiving hospital

## Stress

Everyone has experienced or suffered from the effects of stress. Stress itself is normal as it is the body's natural reaction to a physical and/or emotional challenge<sup>1</sup>. Stress is unavoidable, although the level of stress in a delegation or field office is often higher than in a delegate's normal home environment. If stress lasts too long, the body's resources will be exhausted and the person will develop harmful or negative forms of stress reaction. The term 'burnout' is used when there is an exhaustion of normal stress-coping mechanisms.



## Types of stress

### Basic stress

This is the baseline or underlying stress. Basic stress may be caused by various sources of tension at the individual, emotional, family or social level. It may be increased by changes in the day-to-day environment (being away from family without adequate communication, working with new people from different cultures, uncertainty about work, new information to assimilate, etc.). Delegates need to be prepared for this and learn how to develop strategies to cope with it. Basic stress normally decreases after the first few weeks of a new assignment.

### Cumulative stress

This follows prolonged exposure to work and non-work factors and may develop into professional exhaustion known as burnout.

### Traumatic stress

This is caused by situations outside the range of everyday experience where the delegate's life is perceived to be under immediate threat, or if he or she witnesses or is subject to violence or a natural disaster. Traumatic stress may develop further into post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a pathological condition that will require referral to a mental health specialist.

1. The content of this section is drawn from the publication *Managing stress in the field*, which is available on the International Federation's web site at [www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_pubs.pl?health/stress.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_pubs.pl?health/stress.pdf).

## Symptoms of burnout among relief workers

- ✎ excessive tiredness
- ✎ loss of spirit
- ✎ inability to concentrate
- ✎ somatic symptoms (e.g., headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances, etc.)
- ✎ sleep disruption or difficulties
- ✎ grandiose beliefs about one's own importance (e.g., engaging in heroic but reckless behaviour, ostensibly with the aim of helping others)
- ✎ neglecting one's own safety
- ✎ ignoring physical needs (e.g., showing toughness by not needing sleep or taking breaks)
- ✎ cynicism
- ✎ inefficiency
- ✎ mistrust of co-workers or supervisors
- ✎ excessive alcohol use, caffeine consumption and smoking

## How to prevent cumulative stress

- ✎ Take care of yourself.
- ✎ Recognize the importance of an adequate support system.
- ✎ Use your personal resources fully (e.g., network socially and engage in a sufficient number of leisure activities).
- ✎ Know yourself and your resources, limits and reactions to stress.

### Causes of stress

- difficult living conditions
- heavy workload or inactivity
- unrealistic expectations
- limited control of situation
- problems at home
- relationships and communication
- witnessing violence/tragedy
- cultural differences

Stress and anxiety commonly account for the increased use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances.

- » Share, communicate and be clear by:
  - » finding someone to share your doubts, fears and disappointments with
  - » expressing your needs (to the country representative or your colleagues)
  - » saying 'no' (e.g., to unreasonable work demands)
- » Support each other by:
  - » showing that you care for your colleagues and listen to them
  - » not criticizing or putting down remarks made by your colleagues
  - » being alert to changes in behaviour and proposing action if necessary (e.g., take a long weekend off)
  - » taking the time to talk and share emotions after any security incident
- » Ask for support from Geneva, either from the HR health officer or the stress counsellor by phone, e-mail or fax and visit, if necessary.

### Some tips to help you manage stress

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- » Whenever possible, respect normal working hours and avoid working at weekends.
- » Allow sufficient time for rest, relief and relationships.
- » Eat well-balanced meals at regular times.
- » Avoid excessive alcohol intake.
- » Keep your body fit.
- » Make time to do the things that you enjoy.

In most cases, simple and timely measures can effectively mitigate the consequences of stress. The delegation and its members should always play a critical role in providing immediate support to a delegate in need.

**In the event of a security incident involving injury, the International Federation's HR health officer, as well as the Geneva-based security unit, must be informed immediately.**

### **Health officer's telephone numbers:**

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+41 22 730 4417 – office

+41 79 217 3319 – mobile

E-mail: [hannele.haggman@ifrc.org](mailto:hannele.haggman@ifrc.org)

### **Security unit's numbers:**

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+41 79 217 3371

+41 79 251 8015

+41 79 308 9842

E-mail: [security.unit@ifrc.org](mailto:security.unit@ifrc.org)

### **Psychological support programme for delegates**

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The aim of the psychological support programme is to support each delegate during his or her assignment. Do not hesitate to contact the HR health officer for the contact details of Federation-contracted stress counsellors for advice, including on the following issues:

- » you experience stress
- » you are facing a difficult situation
- » you think a delegate needs help
- » you want to talk to someone outside the delegation in a confidential manner
- » you are in need of advice



**A**s previously mentioned, security planning for your delegation should include contingency plans for when there is a high probability or risk of a disaster occurring in your operational area. In some countries and regions, there are recurring seasonal events that make it easier to know when to plan and what to plan for. Some natural disasters occur with little prior warning.

This chapter provides general guidelines on how you should behave before, during and after the most common types of natural disaster. The information contained here is meant to supplement contingency plans and reinforce activities that ensure your safety when dealing with a natural disaster while on mission.

## General guidelines for natural disasters

In most types of natural disaster, you will have to take the following into consideration.

Telecommunications will, in most cases, be difficult; the telephone system is often the first to break down or become overloaded – both landline and mobile. This is why it is important in areas prone to natural disaster that we maintain some means of back-up communications, such as satellite phones and radio communications systems, as well as the knowledge of how to use these tools.

Transportation and movement may be made difficult due to the destruction of the road system, as well as a fleeing population that could block access. If this occurs, other means of movement need to be put into place, while still emphasizing safety concerns.

First aid and fire safety – As we can expect minor injuries in the team, a complete first-aid kit should be available in offices, residences and all our vehicles. Most medical facilities will be overloaded with major injuries so we must be ready to deal with minor ones ourselves. The same goes for fire safety; extinguishers and fire-fighting equipment must be available in offices, residences and vehicles. First aid and basic fire safety should be part of basic training in areas prone to natural disaster.

Law enforcement will, in most cases, be overstretched and this, combined with a desperate population, will lead to an increase in crimes and violence. Looting and muggings are likely to drastically increase in the aftermath of any natural disaster and will have to be taken into consideration when operating in these circumstances. Office and residential security as well as safe movement will be more important than ever.



**Remember!** Most areas are prone to specific types of natural disaster and all delegations must have conducted a threat and risk analysis to identify some specific risks that can occur based on the type of natural disaster likely to occur in their area. In some cases, this may include risks associated with flooding such as snake bites, the possible presence of crocodiles and an increased risk of malaria. Be proactive and be prepared.

### Before a natural disaster

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- Check the internet, radio and television for the latest information.
- Plan and practise an evacuation route.
- Any evacuation plan should include information on the safest routes to shelters.
- Be sure to identify more than one evacuation route as roads in and out of the area may become blocked.
- Know the location of the nearest hospital or health post.
- Agree on a regrouping point in a safe area, and make sure this is known by you and all your colleagues.

Make sure you have the following emergency equipment stocked:

- ✦ torch and extra batteries
- ✦ radio handset and satellite phone with extra batteries
- ✦ a whistle to attract the attention of rescue workers
- ✦ first-aid kit and manual
- ✦ emergency food and water supplies
- ✦ essential medicines
- ✦ basic tools (spade, axe, rope, nails, hammer, etc.)
- ✦ maps of the area

### During a natural disaster

- ✦ Keep yourself updated by listening to the radio or watching television, if possible, for the latest information.
- ✦ Call outside for updates if the local information services are unavailable.
- ✦ Do not seek shelter in damaged buildings.

### After a natural disaster

- ✦ Regroup in the safe area and conduct a headcount. Make sure that all delegates are accounted for, or their whereabouts and condition are known.
- ✦ Inform the Federation secretariat immediately after an incident.
- ✦ Check yourself for injuries and give first aid to those seriously injured.
- ✦ Remember there is the possibility of new earthquakes, aftershocks, flash floods, mudslides, heavy rain etc., after the initial disaster.
- ✦ Inspect your building for damage and don't go back inside unless you are sure it is safe. Aftershocks, flash floods, heavy rain etc., can be fatal if the building is already weakened or damaged. Stay out of damaged buildings.
- ✦ Collapsing infrastructure, gas explosions and electrocution from damaged electricity networks are some of the major threats after an earthquake.
- ✦ Never touch wires lying on the ground, wires hanging on poles, or objects that may be touching them: they may be carrying a current and could injure or kill if touched. Look for damage to the electricity system. If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or can smell hot cable insulation material, then turn off the electricity supply at the main fuse box or circuit-breaker – but only if you consider it safe to do so. Do not attempt to do so if this means you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit-breaker. Carefully leave the area and call for professional advice.
- ✦ Look for fire hazards, flammable or explosive materials.

- Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, quickly leave the area and warn others. Do not use electrical switches, appliances, telephones or any naked flames if you suspect a gas leak, as sparks can ignite gas.
- If leaking gas starts to burn, do not try to put the flame out.
- Keep yourself updated. If possible, listen to the radio or television for the latest information.



**Remember!** In many cases the radio, TV and telephone systems are the first things to go down in a natural disaster. By having a satellite phone you will still be able to call outside to the zonal office or the Federation secretariat in Geneva for updates on the ongoing natural disaster, as well as to provide an update about your own conditions.

## Earthquakes

Earthquakes strike with no early warning and can be devastating. They cause a strong shaking of the earth's surface, which is produced by movement along geological fault lines. Earthquakes can result in a high number of deaths and injuries, as well as in the serious destruction of buildings and infrastructure.

Earthquakes are measured according to the Richter scale. The most devastating effects are seen with earthquakes measuring 6 and above, and when the epicentre is located in highly populated areas. The depth of the epicentre also plays an important role in the damage capacity of the earthquake.



Earthquakes often trigger landslides and tidal waves. You should also be prepared to experience aftershocks which occur frequently and can cause further damage and increase psychological stress. Although smaller than the main shock, aftershocks may bring weakened structures down. They can occur in the first hours, days, weeks or even months after the initial earthquake.

## Earthquake

### ...before an earthquake

- Identify safe places in each room:
  - under sturdy furniture, such as a heavy desk or table, against an inside wall
  - away from where glass could shatter around windows, mirrors, pictures, or where heavy book-cases or other heavy furniture could fall over

### ...before an earthquake

- Be sure you know how to respond during and after an earthquake.

### ...during an earthquake indoors...

- Make sure you know where to find the emergency exits, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits and know how to use them.
- Stay inside (the most dangerous thing to do during an earthquake is to try to leave the building because objects can fall on you).
- Hold tightly on to your radio, satellite phone and your whistle.

### ...during an earthquake outdoors...

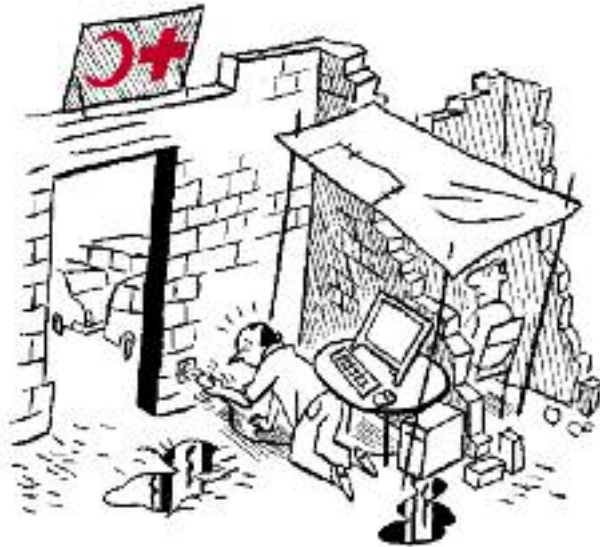
- Move into the open, away from buildings, trees, telephone and power lines, bridges, overpasses and motorway flyovers.
- Once in the open, stay put until the shaking stops.
- Hold tightly on to your radio, satellite phone and your whistle.

## When in a vehicle during an earthquake

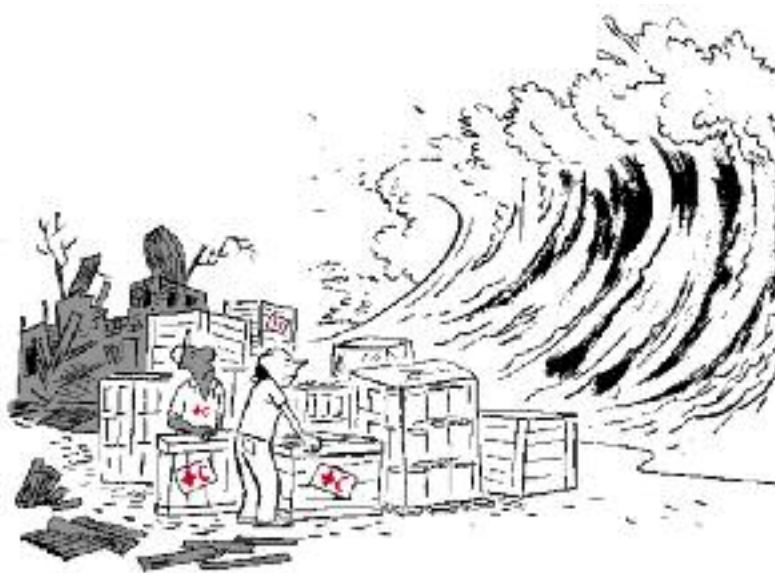
- Move to a clear area away from buildings, trees, bridges, overpasses and telephone and power lines.
- Stop quickly and stay in the vehicle.
- Once the shaking has stopped, proceed with caution. Avoid any bridges or ramps that may have been damaged by the earthquake.

## After earthquakes

- Remember there is the possibility of new earthquakes and aftershocks.
- Ensure that every one of your colleagues is safe, check yourself for injuries and administer first aid to people with serious injuries.
- Inspect your building for damage and don't go back inside unless you are sure it is safe. Aftershocks and a new earthquake can be fatal if the building is already weakened or damaged. Stay out of damaged buildings.



- Do not use electrical switches, appliances, telephones or any naked flame if you suspect a gas leak, as sparks can ignite gas.
- Collapsing infrastructure, gas explosions and electrocution from damaged electricity networks are some of the major threats after an earthquake.
- If you smell gas, hear gas escaping, see a broken gas pipe, or suspect a gas pipe of being broken, then evacuate the building.
- If leaking gas starts to burn, then get away; do not try to put the flame out.
- Check for downed or damaged power lines. Never touch wires lying on the ground, wires hanging on poles, or objects that may be touching them: they may be carrying a current and could injure or kill if touched.



## Tsunamis

A tsunami is a series of waves. Because tsunamis can be caused by an underwater disturbance or an earthquake, people living along the coast should regard an earthquake or a sizeable ground rumbling as a warning signal. A noticeable rapid rise or fall in coastal waters is also a sign that a tsunami is approaching. Do not assume that after one wave hits the shore the danger is over. The next wave may be larger than the first one.

### Before a tsunami

- » Pick an inland location that is elevated or as far away from the coastline as possible as a regrouping point, and make sure that all delegates and staff know the location and the fastest way there. Take traffic congestion and panicked traffic flow into account when planning the route.

### During a tsunami

- » Move at once to higher ground when you hear that a tsunami warning has been sounded.
- » Never go down to the beach to watch a tsunami come in. If you can see the wave, then you are too close to escape being swept away by it.

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## After a tsunami

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- Remember that just because the water may have gone, the danger may still be present.
- Stay out of buildings if they are surrounded by water and use extreme caution when entering buildings. There may be hidden damage, the foundations may have been weakened, the electricity system may have short-circuited, and snakes may have ended up inside.
- Listen for news reports to learn whether the water supply is safe to drink. Avoid flood water; the water may be contaminated.
- Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where the water has receded; roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Clean and disinfect everything that has got wet, as mud left from water can contain sewage and chemicals.

## Floods

Floods are the saturation of a normally dry area caused by a high flow or overflow of water in an established waterway such as a river, stream, or drainage ditch. Floods can also occur when water pools at or near the point where heavy or prolonged rains have fallen. Flash floods that occur rapidly with little or no advance warning are especially dangerous. They are usually the result of intense rainfall over a relatively small area.

### Precautions during flooding

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- Flood dangers do not end when the water level begins to recede so stay out of buildings if flood water remains around the building and, when entering buildings, exercise extreme caution.
- Examine walls, floors, doors and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing.
- Watch out for animals, especially poisonous snakes that may have been brought into your home with the flood waters.
- Look out for loose plaster and ceilings that could fall on you.

- ✎ It only takes 15 centimetres of fast-moving water to knock you off your feet, so do not walk through moving water if it is more than ankle deep; it takes only 60 centimetres of water to cause most cars to float.
- ✎ Have a grab bag ready containing a selection of essential items in case of an emergency evacuation, including an emergency kit (water, food, torch and first-aid kit), warm and hard-wearing clothing (waterproof if possible) and personal essentials and valuables in sealable plastic bags.

### When on foot during a flood

- ✎ Climb to high ground and stay there.
- ✎ Avoid walking through any flood water especially if it is moving swiftly, as it can sweep you off your feet even at shallow depths.

### When in a vehicle during a flood

- ✎ If you come to a flooded area, turn around and take a different route.
- ✎ If the vehicle starts to lose grip and begins to float, counter this by opening the doors to let in water in order to weigh it down.
- ✎ If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground (many deaths have resulted from people attempting to move stalled vehicles).
- ✎ Drive with the windows open (for quick escape if needed).
- ✎ Drive only fast enough to create a small bow wave in front of the vehicle which will prevent the engine from getting wet and the tyres from losing their grip.
- ✎ Follow recommended evacuation routes as short cuts may be blocked.
- ✎ Leave early enough to avoid being marooned by flooded roads.

### Selecting a vehicle

- ✎ Use all-terrain vehicles such as four-wheel drive jeeps, with tyres suitable for wet conditions.
- ✎ The air intake on many modern cars is located low down, at the front of the engine bay, and it only takes a small quantity of water sucked into the engine to cause serious damage. All engines will be affected but turbo-charged and diesel engines are the most vulnerable. The air intake should be positioned as close to the roofline as possible.
- ✎ Windows should be wound down manually, not electronically, in case the electrical system gets wet and windows cannot be wound down.

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## After a flood

- Remember that just because the water may have gone, the danger may still be present (mines moved by the flood water, stressed and angry wild animals and snakes, etc.).
- Remember that there is the possibility of new floods and landslides.
- Ensure that every one of your colleagues is safe, check yourself for injuries and administer first aid to people with serious injuries.
- Inspect your building for damage and don't go back inside unless you are sure it is safe.
- Stay out of buildings if they are surrounded by water and use extreme caution when entering buildings. There may be hidden damage, the foundations may have been weakened, the electricity system may have short-circuited, and snakes may have ended up inside.
- Listen for news reports to learn whether the water supply is safe to drink. Avoid flood water; the water may be contaminated.
- Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Avoid moving water.
- Be aware of areas where the water has receded; roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
- Clean and disinfect everything that has got wet, as mud left from water can contain sewage and chemicals.

## Mudslides

Mudslides occur when torrential rainfall fails to drain properly and causes nearby rocks and dirt to become unstable and to slide down a hill or mountain. Mudslides are powerful and can move faster than people can walk or run. They are most likely to occur close to stream channels. Remember that flooding may occur after a mudslide.

Some mudslides can be massive, similar to an avalanche, and can destroy villages and even cities if large enough.

## When indoors during a mudslide

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- ✎ Stay inside.
- ✎ Take cover under a desk, table or other piece of sturdy furniture.

## When outdoors during a mudslide

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- ✎ Try and get out of the path of the landslide or mudslide.
- ✎ Run to the nearest high ground in a direction away from the path of the mudslide.
- ✎ If rocks and other debris are approaching, run for the nearest shelter such as a group of trees or a building.
- ✎ If escape is not possible, curl up into a tight ball and protect your head.

## When in a vehicle during a mudslide

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- ✎ If you come to a mudslide area, turn around and take a different route.
- ✎ If you approach a bridge, first look upstream and if you see a mudslide approaching or moving beneath the bridge, do not cross the bridge as the power of the mudslide can destroy a bridge very quickly.
- ✎ If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

## After a mudslide

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- ✎ Check the building foundations, chimney and surrounding land for damage.
- ✎ If safe, get away from the area (there may be a risk of additional mudslides).

# Hurricanes and cyclones

A hurricane or cyclone refers to a type of storm with winds at a constant speed of over 100 kilometres per hour. These winds blow in a large spiral around a relatively calm centre of extremely low atmospheric pressure known as the eye. Around the rim of the eye, winds may gust up to more than 300 kilometres per hour. This type of storm can dominate the sea and ocean surface and the lower atmosphere over tens of thousands of square kilometres.

## Before a hurricane or cyclone

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- ✎ Make sure that you and all your team members are in a safe location (on high ground) before the hurricane or cyclone hits (the best option is for everyone to be in the same location), and make sure the structure is in good condition.

- The property (residence) and surroundings should be free of any loose material that could cause injury and damage during extreme winds.
- Your location and that of your team members should be battened down, i.e., secure the doors, and board up and tape or cover the windows to avoid flying glass and other objects from coming in.
- Have a grab bag ready containing a selection of essential items in case of an emergency evacuation, including an emergency kit (water, food, torch and first-aid kit), warm and hard-wearing clothing (waterproof if possible) and personal essentials and valuables in sealable plastic bags.

### During a hurricane or cyclone

- Remain indoors – away from windows, skylights and glass doors – and remain in the strongest part of the building.
- In flood-prone areas do not use the cellar or basement since these areas can be extremely dangerous due to existing flooding.
- If the building you are in starts to break up or fall apart, then the only option is to protect yourself with a mattress, rugs, blankets or tarpaulin, and to hold on to any strong fixtures (such as water pipes), or get under a strong, heavy table or bed.
- Do not run out into the open.
- Beware of the calm when the eye of the storm is over your area, and do not assume the cyclone is over (the blowing of violent and strong winds will soon resume).
- If you are driving, stop and stay clear of trees, power lines and streams.
- Avoid using naked flames, such as candles and paraffin lamps, as a source of light.
- Take cover in a room without windows.



## After a hurricane or cyclone

- ❖ You must be careful to avoid damaged power lines, bridges, buildings, trees and any flood waters.
- ❖ Undertake a headcount to make sure all the team members are safe and sound.

## Hurricanes and cyclones during flooding

The hurricane or cyclone will worsen any existing flooding and may create different flood patterns. The team members should not be outdoors when the cyclone hits, and should instead seek shelter in safe, solid housing.

Storm surges and cyclones in areas that have already been flooded can undermine building foundations by constant agitation of the water – already at a high level from the flood – while the force of the cyclone does the rest. This can result in a building being completely demolished. It is therefore extremely important to stay in houses that are strong and that have not already been affected by flooding.

Also bear in mind that additional flooding and cyclones can easily trigger mudslides and landslides.

## Volcanic eruptions

Volcanic eruptions happen when lava and gas are discharged from a volcanic vent in the earth's surface. Volcanic eruptions can hurl hot lava and rocks as far as 30 kilometres. Floods, airborne ash and noxious fumes can travel 160 kilometres or more. If you live or work near a known volcano, active or dormant, be ready to evacuate at a moment's notice. Stay out of the area. A lateral blast of a volcano can travel many kilometres from the mountain. Trying to watch an erupting volcano is a potentially deadly activity.

Be prepared for other types of disaster that can be triggered by a volcanic eruption (earthquakes, flash floods, landslides and mudslides, tornadoes and tsunamis). Although it may seem safe to stay at home or in the office and wait out an eruption, doing so could be very dangerous. The rock debris from a volcano can break windows and set buildings on fire. Leave the area before the disaster begins.

## When indoors...

### ...before a volcanic eruption

- Avoid areas downwind of the volcano.
- Get to high ground, away from the eruption.
- Procure a pair of goggles and a disposable breathing mask for each delegate.

### ...during a volcanic eruption

- Close all windows, doors and furnace or fireplace flues.
- Store all equipment and machinery inside a garage or barn.

### ...after a volcanic eruption

- Clear roof of fallen ash as it is very heavy and can cause buildings to collapse.

## When outdoors...

### ...before a volcanic eruption

- Avoid areas downwind of the volcano.

### ...during a volcanic eruption

- If caught in a rockfall, roll into a ball to protect your head.
- Avoid low-lying areas where poisonous gases can collect and flash floods can be most dangerous.
- If caught near a stream, beware of mudslides.
- If possible, seek shelter indoors.

## When in a vehicle during a volcanic eruption

- Keep car or truck engine switched off.
- Avoid driving when ash is falling heavily as driving will stir up more ash that may clog your vehicle's engine and cause it to stall.

## Protect yourself from volcanic eruptions by

- wearing long-sleeved shirts and trousers
- using goggles to protect your eyes
- using a face mask or holding a damp cloth over your face to aid breathing
- keeping skin covered to avoid irritation or burns
- staying away from falling volcanic ash, covering your mouth and nose



**Remember!** When a natural disaster occurs, the local population will place a high demand on Federation staff with the expectation that we are in a position to assist with a wide range of concerns, including immediate medical assistance, medical supplies, emergency food rations and whatever other help is needed. In most cases, the International Federation will not be in a position to address all these immediate concerns which may result in frustration and anger from the local population towards staff. It is therefore important that it is communicated clearly to the local population what our capabilities are in terms of immediate assistance and our response capacity in the immediate future. Ideally, it is better to be conservative when giving dates such as when particular assistance – including manpower and materials – will be arriving. Remember not to raise the expectations of the community beyond what is realistically possible. People will generally understand and accept our constraints when properly disseminated, rather than us raising unrealistic expectations that are then not met.

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**T**here may be times when you are working in the field that you find yourself having to deal with an emergency situation. You should prepare for this ahead of time if the mission you accept is in a country or area prone to insecurity. Even if you have accepted a mission to an area or country that is considered low risk in terms of security, the situation in your operational area can rapidly deteriorate, with little warning. This is why it has been emphasized throughout this manual that your personal security relies on always knowing and being aware of your environment.

Your reaction to dangerous and emergency situations should be specific to the situation. There are no templates that cover every situation in every context. The purpose of this chapter is to provide you with guidelines on how to behave when confronted with some common types of dangerous situation.



**Remember!** There is no golden rule about what to do when faced with a dangerous situation: your actions should be specific to the context. As well as following the rules for your operational context, maintain personal awareness of the security situation at all times in order to reduce risk.

## Protective measures in high-risk areas

When working in insecure environments, particularly in areas of conflict or where there is a perceived threat of shelling, bombing, small arms fire or other similar incidents, there may be a need to construct some kind of added protection or to take preventative measures to mitigate the potential impact when such incidents occur. The kind of measures taken should depend on your threat, vulnerability and risk assessment, and the type of material available.

Measures could include building shelters or a blast wall (external or internal) at all building locations or strengthening building structures. Be aware though that blast walls and shelters can offer adequate protection from small arms fire, grenades and nearby blasts, but they will not withstand a direct hit from artillery fire or aerial bombing.

If done correctly, the basic and most effective way of providing more secure areas or 'hardening the shell' is to use sandbags as protection material in blast walls, shelters or any method of fortifying Federation premises in the field. The construction of such protective measures is relatively simple and can provide basic protection for

your building against the effects of small arms fire, artillery, mortars and explosive devices generally. However, these measures may also provide a false sense of security and can encourage staff to take unnecessary risks and delay a decision to relocate because of an over-reliance on the protective measures in place.



The considerations given in this chapter to the construction of blast walls and shelters only cover the most basic measures to be included. Any Federation delegation or office that finds it necessary to take such protective measures should seriously reconsider maintaining its presence in the area and what the implications are for the security of its staff.

For practical information on how to construct shelters and blast walls, you should refer to the security handbook *Staying Alive*<sup>1</sup> published by the ICRC, which includes excellent step-by-step approaches in the design of shelters and protective walls with explanatory diagrams for users.



**Remember!** No matter how well a blast wall or a shelter is constructed, it is unlikely to protect you from a direct hit such as from an artillery shell striking the top of the shelter or bunker that you constructed.

## Sandbags

Sandbags can provide a simple yet effective protective barrier and shelter that is inexpensive. Sandbags are able to absorb the blast efficiently because of the movement and friction of the soil and grains, which create multiple tiny air gaps between the particles.

### Material required for the construction of a sandbag-based shelter

- ▀ **Filling** – Sand is the preferred material but, if none is available, then use other soil material. Keep the soil particles small and do not fill bags with stones.
- ▀ **Sandbags** – Bags made of jute (an inexpensive natural fibre) have been in use for years. Jute is considered the most suitable material for sandbags. Bags made of other common materials such as polypropylene and plastic may also be used but are less ideal as they are more at risk of bursting or even rotting in humid conditions.
- ▀ **Support beams** – Wooden planks are ideal for strengthening roofs and as support beams for walls. They also add another protective layer against small arms fire and bomb blasts.

<sup>1</sup>. Available at [www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/p0717/\\$File/ICRC\\_002\\_0717.PDF](http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/p0717/$File/ICRC_002_0717.PDF)

- **Shovels** – The number of shovels needed would depend on the number of people involved in the construction work.
- **String** – All sandbags must be tied up securely at the neck.

To ensure that any fortifications you construct using sandbags are effective, you must bear in mind that:

- small is usually better, with the ideal size of a sandbag being about 60 centimetres long and 30 centimetres wide
- bags should not be overfilled; they should be three-quarters full and tied with string around the neck
- sandbags must be interlocked for stability (see illustration), as those that are not interlocked will reduce protection and make the barricade unstable
- seams and bag necks should face inwards and not towards the outer side of the wall
- bags should be laid in horizontal layers so they overlap, with the first layer of sandbags laid head-on (called headers) and the second layer laid lengthways along the wall (called stretchers).



## Shelters

For a number of reasons, it is preferable to construct shelters inside your residence or office building, particularly since it saves response time when you need to seek cover quickly, makes for easier access and eliminates the need for you to go out into the open on your way to the shelter. Of course, this depends on whether your building has a suitable shelter (e.g., a basement or underground facility such as a garage). Creating a shelter inside a building has the advantage

of that occupants not having to expose themselves to danger while making their way to an external shelter.

### Some tips

- ✎ The shelter should be in the basement, if possible, as the ground floor should withstand the possible collapse of the building.
- ✎ If there is no basement, then build the shelter in a ground floor room and provide extra support for the ceiling, for example, by using strong wooden beams or logs.
- ✎ While a ground floor room or basement will make a better shelter than a room on an upper floor, there is a risk of being trapped should the building collapse. Therefore, keep emergency digging tools in each room used as a shelter and always construct two or more exits out of the shelter.

### In terms of layout

- ✎ Always try to construct the shelter against a wall, if possible, which can then be hardened with a blast wall (for example, made of sandbags).
- ✎ You may want to build a blast wall in front of the entrance for cover against small arms fire or blasts when entering and exiting.
- ✎ The shelter should be just big enough for the intended users to squeeze in as the larger a shelter, the weaker it becomes.
- ✎ Outside shelters should have a blast wall and sandbag tunnel to protect the entrance and strong supportive beams for the walls and roof. A double layer of sandbags on the roof is recommended.

### Finally, a shelter should always have the following equipment and supplies:

- ✎ radio communications/back-up and batteries
- ✎ torches, candles and matches
- ✎ bottled water
- ✎ food supplies for two or three days
- ✎ toilet bucket and basic toiletries
- ✎ first-aid kit
- ✎ firefighting equipment
- ✎ digging equipment such as shovels

## Blast walls

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Most of you have probably seen blast walls on television or at the cinema where sandbags are stacked against the side of a building or to provide a protective wall for soldiers. The main idea behind such walls is to provide adequate protection against the effects of shell or bomb blasts, in addition to protecting against small arms fire and snipers. As illustrated below, while you may think you are safe when you take cover in a spot that is out of sight (meaning that you cannot be seen by an attacker), the cover you are using could easily be penetrated by most small arms fire.

### When to construct blast walls

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- to provide cover for guards and staff while moving about in the open
- against windows
- to protect vital stocks and equipment such as fuel containers, generators, communications and medical equipment
- to strengthen building walls against the effects of blasts and shrapnel
- To protect entrances to shelters and buildings

## Actions if fired upon

There are situations where you may find yourself under fire from small arms. This extremely stressful event can take place in a number of situations. Advice on how to react in the most common types of situation is given in this section.

### When in a vehicle

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- Try to determine where the shots are coming from.
- If you consider that you are the target and are sufficiently far away, it may be best to drive away.
- Reversing or turning is not a good idea as it slows you down and makes you an easier target to hit.
- If you cannot tell where the shots are coming from or if they are coming from around or behind you, it may be an ambush – accelerate and try to get away.
- The alternative is to stop, get out of the car and lie flat on the ground away from the vehicle.

## When on foot

- » Quickly find cover in a ditch, behind rocks or a building (the best protection is to find cover from fire and from view, while the next best is cover from view only).
- » Move across the line of fire – not directly away.
- » Leave the scene only after the firing has stopped.
- » Never take shelter under a car.
- » Do not look up to see what is going on.

**It is very hard to hit a moving target so be prepared to move – and move fast.**

## When in a building

- » Drop instantly to the floor.
- » Assess where the firing is coming from.
- » Crawl to a place where there are more walls between you and the gunfire, such as in an inner room, corridor, staircase or the middle of a room.
- » Stay away from windows, as shattering glass is a major cause of death and injury.

**If you can get to your shelter safely, then go there and wait for the shooting to stop.**

## When directly threatened by arms

- » Stay where you are (e.g., if in a car, stay in the car).
- » Make sure your hands are clearly visible (if in a car, ensure your hands are clearly visible on the steering wheel).
- » Do not be aggressive, do not try to escape.
- » Remain passive, but demonstrate personal composure and calmness.
- » Move slowly with precise gestures, always speaking quietly and distinctly.
- » Identify yourself and say that you are from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent.

**Nothing is more valuable than your life, so do what you are told and give them what they request or what you have.**

## Explosions

The chances of being caught up in an explosion while on mission are fairly remote. However, it is wise to avoid high-risk locations such as restaurants, bars, diplomatic missions, etc., that are known to be frequented by people who could be likely targets. If you are in the vicinity of an explosion, leave as quickly as possible.

**A common terrorist tactic is to trigger a small explosion, followed by a large one to target crowds and rescuers responding to the first one.**



If on foot in the open when an explosion occurs

- Drop instantly to the ground and lie flat.
- If possible, get into a ditch, building or behind a wall.
- Most blast debris and shrapnel flies upwards from the explosion (in a cone shape), so remember to stay as close to the ground as possible.
- Take account of the local situation.
- Leave the area quickly after an explosion.

**With the correct reaction it is often possible to survive explosions that are very close by.**

### If in a vehicle when an explosion occurs

- ✎ Stop the vehicle, get out quickly and lie flat on the ground away from the vehicle, (e.g., in a ditch if available and deemed safe).
- ✎ If you consider that you are the target, then drive away as fast as is safely possible.

**As always, the decision depends on the assessment of the situation and good judgement.**

### If you are in a building when an explosion occurs

- ✎ Drop to the floor and move away from windows.
- ✎ If it is safe to do so, move into an inner room or a corridor that is better protected than other rooms.
- ✎ Stay away from windows.

**Many injuries and deaths are caused by shattering glass.**

## Bomb alerts

If a bomb alert has been sounded in your vicinity, immediate action is required to maximize your security. Guidelines for two different scenarios are given below.

### When in the delegation office

- ✎ If you are aware of the possible presence of a bomb (e.g., by a telephoned threat and/or a suspicious package), activate the fire alarm, call reception and the country representative immediately, telling them and others of the bomb threat.
- ✎ Do not wait to confirm but evacuate the building as soon as possible.
- ✎ If you hear the fire alarm and are informed there is a bomb threat, evacuate the building immediately through your nearest fire exit to the designated assembly area and report to your security focal point (fire warden, if applicable).
- ✎ Once all Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel are accounted for, you will probably be evacuated to a predetermined secondary evacuation area to ensure you are well away from the likely point of impact.
- ✎ Do not re-enter the delegation's premises or buildings until you are instructed by the head of delegation that all is clear.

## Hand grenades and other explosive devices

The use of hand grenades and home-made explosive devices targeting humanitarian aid workers has increased during the last few years. Usually, such devices are used to send a signal or message to the organization, rather than with the intent of inflicting injury. One common method is to throw the device over a perimeter wall of an office building or under a vehicle.

The most common type of hand grenade is the fragmentation hand grenade, which produces a casualty radius of about 15 metres, although fragments can disperse over an area of 250 metres. All staff should be briefed on the correct action to take, but at particular risk are local security guards. They should therefore be provided with some form of protection at their duty posts, such as sandbag cover or the addition of a half-metre concrete wall next to their post, enabling them to get cover within one to two seconds.

A grenade, or any home-made thrown device, will have a fuse that may only allow three seconds from the time it is activated until detonation. You, therefore, do not have time to run for cover but must act immediately.

### **Do not attempt to pick up the grenade to throw it back or away**

(It may detonate in your hand or you may throw it towards innocent passers-by.)

#### **Instead, you should:**

- Shout “grenade” to warn your colleagues.
- Turn away from the grenade.
- Take one step and dive to the ground.
- Keep your feet together, turn your head to one side and open your mouth (this helps to equalize the airways and prevent burst eardrums).
- After the grenade explodes, check on all colleagues and visitors for casualties.
- If the grenade does not explode within 30 seconds, crawl to cover and vacate the area (a minimum safe distance is 150 metres or behind thick walls).
- Contact the police.

#### **If you are in a vehicle**

- Lie down on the seat and cover your head with your hands.
- If driving and you think a grenade has landed under or beside your vehicle, then drive away quickly.

## If a bomb explodes in or near the delegation office

- If you hear a loud explosion, take cover immediately on the floor (preferably under a table), wait until the effects of the blast subside and avoid looking out of windows (to minimize the risk of being injured by flying glass).
- Activate the fire alarm, immediately evacuate the building as you would in the event of a fire through your nearest fire exit to the predetermined assembly area, and report to your designated security focal point.
- Once out of the building, call the fire service, police and emergency ambulance, and, if applicable, inform gate guards of arriving emergency vehicles.
- Administer first aid to the injured.
- If you are uninjured, then once your name is noted in the assembly area, proceed to the secondary gathering area to await further instructions.

## Blast film

Since the resurgence of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) – otherwise known as car bombs – that began in Iraq in 2003, blast or shatter-resistant film on office and residence windows has become a popular choice among many humanitarian organizations in an attempt to minimize casualties caused by flying glass and debris from bomb blasts.

The greatest number of injuries to staff within a building involved in a bomb blast is caused by airborne glass fragments. Statistics show that up to 80 per cent of casualties in buildings affected by blasts are injured or killed by glass fragments. The shards and fragments created by an explosive force initially travel outwards from the blast, then inwards, striking people in both directions.

Shatter-resistant film aims to keep panes of glass together, even after they may have shattered, thus reducing the number of sharp projectiles slicing through the air and the occupants of a building. Note that an explosion on one side of a building will cause the glass on all sides to be projected inside (due to the sudden over-pressure that envelops it), so the film should be applied to all glass – both inside and outside.

There are two methods for installing the film.

1. Dry-fitting involves applying the film directly to the inside of each pane of glass without removing it from its frame. With dry-fitting, the risk is that any explosion that is big or close enough will propel the entire pane of glass

(shattered but held together by the film) as a single piece (accompanied by small fragments) into the interior of the building – potentially with enough force to kill anyone it hits.

2. Wet-fitting involves removing each pane, applying the film to the interior side and wrapping the film around the edges of the glass before remounting it in a reinforced frame. With wet-fitting, it is far less likely that the pane of glass (and window frame) will be propelled inside, but installation is much more expensive.



**Remember!** Any thorough risk analysis that identifies a need for shatter-resistant film will also call for an array of other protective measures (physical and procedural) to mitigate the risks to staff and assets. The quality of blast film and adhesives used is important in ensuring their effectiveness, as is proper installation.

A far less expensive means of mitigating the risk that staff will be injured by flying glass is to remove the glass – before it becomes a lethal projectile. This includes all glass in the interior of the building. The open windows should then be covered with clear plastic sheeting (or just insect screens in buildings without air conditioning).

If you do not want to remove all the glass, then heavy curtains can help contain glass fragments. But the curtains need to be kept closed and, in general, can also be quite expensive. Make sure nothing is left on window sills (such as potted plants) that can become lethal projectiles in the event of a nearby blast.

Note that taping the windows in asterisk-shaped patterns does little, if anything at all, to protect you from bomb explosions. Other simple things you can do to reduce your vulnerability are to move your desk, sitting areas and beds away from windows.

**The question to ask is do you need blast film? If the answer is, yes, then the second question that should be asked is, should, we still be here?**

## Ambush

Besides being shot at, there are a number of typical situations that could indicate an ambush. These can include:

- » an obstacle placed in the road
- » a fake accident or injured person
- » hitting your car to fake an accident
- » a landmine or other explosion
- » shooting at you
- » forcing you off the road with a vehicle
- » attacks at residence entry gates
- » attacks at traffic lights or in traffic jams
- » people blocking the road
- » false checkpoints

Most often, ambushes occur on the ascent or descent of steep hills, on poor or bad roads, over a hilltop, on tight roads, in or near a forest, and around sharp bends or turns.



### How to avoid being ambushed

- » Maintain up-to-date security information (situation, location and type of possible ambush) through, for example, regular security briefings and a review of police statistics.
- » Observe the local population for any sign of unusual behaviour, such as local people no longer greeting you as they have always done in the past or avoiding you completely.
- » Vary the routes you take as well as the times of departure.

- Do not travel at night.
- Consider implementing a two-vehicle policy (two vehicles travelling together for enhanced security).

### How to react during an ambush

- The common reaction to stop, look, try to understand and only then attempt to flee will cost you valuable time. You must make an instant decision and act: stay or flee.
- In most cases, the best way to get away is to drive through the ambush.
- If you cannot drive away, get out of the car and, if possible, run away. If not, lie down until any shooting stops.
- If you see the ambush before you get there, or you see others being ambushed, then drive away and contact the police.

**If you are in any doubt, turn back.**

## Hijacking

In general, the aim of a hijacking is either to:

- steal a car or its belongings
- take hostages
- obtain a vehicle for another crime
- injure or kill

The risk of hijacking is obviously greater in high-crime areas and those recovering from a past conflict, or where a large-scale demobilization of soldiers has taken place. The best way to avoid hijackings is to avoid becoming a victim. This can be done most effectively by:

- carrying out regular risk assessments
- conducting planning and briefing sessions before undertaking travel
- having a knowledge of the local situation and recent events
- assessing the need to travel
- travelling at a safe time and taking a safe route
- driving with another vehicle (two-vehicle convoy) and making frequent and correct use of the radio
- using escorts or armoured vehicles (only as a last resort)

In addition, always be familiar with threats in your area of operation and the techniques used if hijackings have previously taken place. It is also important to

know and avoid the most dangerous areas and times for travel. Sharing information with other Red Cross and Red Crescent actors on the ground and other humanitarian organizations is vital.

As with ambush situations described above, the most common *modus operandi* for hijackings include:

- ✦ roadblocks or checkpoints
- ✦ bogus government officials or police officers
- ✦ attacks at residence entry gates
- ✦ attacks at traffic lights or in traffic jams
- ✦ attacks when parking or entering a vehicle
- ✦ forcing you off the road with a vehicle
- ✦ hitting your car to fake an accident
- ✦ staging a fake accident or breakdown

### How to avoid hijackings

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- ✦ Be observant while driving (i.e., no music playing) and keep your window and doors locked.
- ✦ Avoid travelling through suspicious or unknown areas.
- ✦ Do not travel close to military, police or government vehicles.
- ✦ Do not travel alone or at night.
- ✦ Use the red cross or red crescent flag.
- ✦ Do not display items of value in your vehicle.
- ✦ Avoid predictable routine/pattern/time for movements.
- ✦ If you think you are being followed:
  - ✦ Stay calm and do not speed.
  - ✦ Change direction to see if anyone is following you.
  - ✦ Avoid small side roads.
  - ✦ If attackers are closing in, keep to the centre of the road.
  - ✦ Maintain a distance from the car in front of you.
  - ✦ Do not drive home, but to a safe place.
  - ✦ Alert security officers at the delegation or its guard company.

### How to behave during a hijacking attempt

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- ✦ Assess the situation and decide whether to stop or not.
- ✦ Balance the risk of being stopped and robbed, assaulted or kidnapped against the risk of attempting to escape.

- In most cases, the best option is to stop and give them what they want rather than risk trying to get away.
- Only try to get away if you think you can make it.

**If you think the hijackers are likely to kill or hurt you, then get away at any cost.**



### How to behave during a hijacking

- Do not provoke.
- Do not resist: give the hijackers anything they demand – except your life.
- If possible, negotiate to keep the radio, flag/logo, water and spare clothing.
- Report the incident as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Make no sudden movements: always keep your hands in clear view.

Try to get away during a hijacking *only* if:

- it is known that hijacks in the area often lead to assault, kidnapping, murder or rape, and that stopping will result in greater danger
- you are confronted by an angry mob
- survival without a car is dangerous
- the opportunity to escape presents itself

**Bear in mind that escaping a hijacking requires good driving skills.**

## Hostage situations

In the event of the abduction, kidnapping or taking hostage of any Red Cross or Red Crescent personnel, the procedures for critical incident management come into force (see Chapter 4 of *Stay safe: The International Federation's guide for security managers*, Incident management). There are, however, preparations that can be made at both the headquarters level (Geneva) and field level if the risk of abduction or kidnapping is assessed to be high in the area of operation. Bearing in mind that initial motives can change during captivity, some possible motives for kidnapping include:

- ✦ the suspicion that the victim is a spy
- ✦ political or ideological
- ✦ ethnicity
- ✦ financial
- ✦ local disputes
- ✦ victim's own 'protection'
- ✦ sexual abuse
- ✦ unplanned
- ✦ for use as human shields
- ✦ to terrorize or as a repressive measure

### Preparations at headquarters level

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- ✦ Identify and train a crisis management team.
- ✦ Clarify government policy and potential assistance from authorities in the country concerned.
- ✦ Identify possible external expertise.
- ✦ Identify post-crisis support needs and how to meet them.
- ✦ Maintain appropriate staff records.
- ✦ Ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place in at-risk locations and that staff are always updated on known risks.

The crisis management team at headquarters should be the senior decision-making authority and coordinate all actions to facilitate release. Note that the Red Cross and Red Crescent does not pay ransoms or provide goods under duress, but will use all appropriate means to secure the release of staff detained, kidnapped or held hostage.

## Preparations at field level

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- If an assessment shows that the threat of abduction is high, create a kidnapping information database for staff and delegates, including personal information, recent photos, family contact information, medical requirements, blood type, etc.
- Maintain close contact with other Movement components in the country (i.e., ICRC, Federation sub-delegations or offices, and the host National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society).
- The crisis management team should liaise regularly with the corresponding team at headquarters in Geneva.
- Establish appropriate contacts with embassies and other diplomatic bodies.
- Clarify whom to contact within the host country's government and its security forces.
- Identify a competent local lawyer.

Headquarters and field-based teams must remember to manage all relations with:

- the abducted person's family
- the authorities (host and home country's government)
- the local and international press
- other staff and employees
- other organizations working in the country
- the captors
- communicators/negotiators

## If you are taken hostage

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Although it is very specific to the context, should you find yourself in a situation where you are being held captive or detained against your will, the following are some general dos and don'ts on how to behave during your time in captivity.



**Remember!** The physical and psychological needs of a person released from captivity, as well of those closely affected, take priority over any other demands.

## Do

remain as calm and composed as possible, particularly when being transported somewhere by the captors (if you can stay calm, your captors may stay calm), and be prepared for blindfolding, restraints or being physically hurt

accept that you must follow orders given, but try to preserve a sense of self-esteem and personal dignity as much as the situation allows

talk to the captors, provided this does not make them more nervous

if possible, develop a rapport with the captors and try to earn their respect

be sceptical of information given to you by your captors

keep as clean as possible and ask for washing and toilet facilities

give captors details of any necessary medical treatment

eat the food that is offered, even if it is unpalatable

stay healthy through mental and physical exercise

take advantage of any comforts or privileges offered by the captors such as books, newspapers or access to the radio and, if not offered, ask for them (if appropriate, gradually increase requests for personal hygiene items or books)

expect to experience depression brought on by post-capture shock and trauma

recognize captivity as a reality, and mentally accept the change of status and circumstances

prepare mentally for a long wait – perhaps for many months – before release

try to keep an accurate record of time and request writing materials

try to focus mental activity on the future and your freedom

## Don't

engage in verbal abuse and don't enter into conversations on controversial subjects, such as political and religious beliefs, with your captors

negotiate for your own release, or discuss what action the Red Cross or Red Crescent may take as such discussions could compromise ongoing negotiations

adopt a belligerent, hostile or sullen attitude

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As the danger is greatest during the initial hours of hostage taking and during release or a rescue attempt, proceed with great care when the time for release comes:

- Listen to orders given by your captors and obey them immediately.
- Stay alert and be prepared to act quickly if things go wrong.
- Be prepared for delays and disappointments.
- Do not make any sudden or unexpected moves.

Bear in mind that the danger level is also high when the situation is changing and everyone is agitated, such as when moving from one place to another.

An escape attempt that fails will normally result in violence and greater mistreatment. You should only consider an escape attempt if you believe you can succeed, and if you believe that you are in greater danger remaining captive.



**Remember!** If kidnapped, every effort will be made by the International Federation to secure the release of its staff members.

### During a rescue attempt

- Lie on the ground or stay low.
- Keep under cover and keep your hands on your head (to show you are unarmed).
- Be prepared to identify yourself.
- Be prepared to be handled roughly by rescuers and treated with suspicion until they have clearly identified you.

## Mines and unexploded ordnance

Any area that has been fought over and where the warring parties established strong defensive positions (in particular, where those positions changed hands) will usually be mined. This is especially true of lowlands in front of defensive hill positions. Such areas may also contain a lot of unused or undetonated explosives and ammunition. Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel working in such areas must follow particularly strict security rules and take precautionary measures.

This section is only a brief introduction to a very complex subject. The guidelines that follow are only meant to provide initial mine awareness information. It is strongly recommended that country representatives organize special mine aware-

ness training for staff working in areas where mines are known – or suspected – to have been laid.

Experience shows that long-term residents and the local population of mined areas often become careless and tend to take unnecessary risks. Remember that mines and explosives do not discriminate: as soon as they are initiated, no one is immune. The only way to protect yourself is to avoid setting them off or not to travel in mined areas.

Although mines and their tripwires are usually buried and deliberately or naturally camouflaged, there are many clues to the presence of mines that can be recognized even by an inexperienced person, namely:

- ✦ Battlefield relics such as bunkers, barbed wire entanglements, ammunition dumps, helmets, destroyed vehicles, abandoned weapons, etc.
- ✦ Animal remains, remnants of footwear or any similar signs that may indicate that something or someone has fallen victim to a mine.
- ✦ Dirty yellow and green objects, metallic or plastic surfaces (not all mines are round: some are oblong and made of wood).
- ✦ Taut, partly buried or entangled thin-gauge wire or filament (similar to a fishing line).
- ✦ Wooden stakes, especially if seen in conjunction with wire.
- ✦ Unusual colours or shapes. Be suspicious of exposed round edges as they rarely occur in nature.

#### General rules to follow when in mined areas

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- ✦ Travel in high-risk areas only when absolutely necessary.
  - ✦ Avoid time spent in mined areas.
  - ✦ Keep to well-used roads that have been checked for mines.
  - ✦ Stick to hard-surfaced roads and avoid freshly dug dirt roads.
  - ✦ Never step off the road/track to urinate.
  - ✦ Follow local advice with caution.
  - ✦ Get an updated mine safety briefing, including maps of mined areas, from professional mine clearance or mine awareness organizations.
  - ✦ Know the type of mines used in the area.
  - ✦ Remember that mines move.
  - ✦ Never approach or touch mines.
  - ✦ Never use your radio when near mines.

Always assume that if there is one mine there will be others, as mines are seldom laid individually. Be aware that mines can move – especially during heavy rains, mudslides and floods – so when working in areas affected by these conditions you need to take special care.

Be aware that in areas where insurgents, rebel factions or other warring parties are active, minefields that have been reported as cleared may have been remined. Mines can also be shifted or placed on roads at night.

### What to do if you find a mine

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- Stop all movement and warn everyone around you.
- Contact your operational base and request specialist assistance from a demining agency in your area.
- Do not move while you are waiting for the mine specialists to arrive.

**High security awareness is needed at all times. Many mine-related injuries occur because people do not see the mines, ignore the danger or do not pay enough attention to their surroundings.**

### Marking mines

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Do not attempt to mark individual mines as you may injure yourself by setting off the mine or by lifting a stone or pulling on a stick that has been booby-trapped. It is preferable to call the professionals and stay put until they arrive so you can warn anyone coming your way.

If you have to leave, then you can leave a marker on the road to indicate that there are mines ahead. In mine-affected countries, locally agreed or common signs are often used. You need to know what they are for your own security and to be able to correctly warn others. You should carry something in your vehicle to make such markings.

### If someone is injured in a minefield

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- Do not rush in to help as those rushing to help are very often either killed or maimed themselves.

- First aid can only be given once a safe path has been established to the injured person and this should be done (if/when feasible) by professionals, either trained military personnel or specialists from a demining organization, which is why it is important to have their contact information at all times.
- If you need to probe a path (see below) to the mine victim to administer first aid and to get them out, this should only be done if the victim is still alive and as a last, lifesaving resort, and only if there is no professional help to call for.
- Make sure that when you reach the victim, you probe an area around and beneath them (see box on next page) .
- If the injured person is out of control, panicking or hysterical, you must calm them down before getting too close, otherwise the victim will jeopardize your life as well as his or her own. In many cases, however, mine victims are unusually calm due to the traumatic shock they have suffered.
- Talk to the injured person and try to get him or her to stop the bleeding without moving too much.
- When first aid has been administered and when you are ready to move out of the minefield, you must make sure you use exactly the same path you used to get in.

As a last, lifesaving resort to find a safe path out of a minefield, or a path in to save someone's life, you should do the following:

- Follow the original route into the minefield exactly, either by following the vehicle's tyre marks or footsteps. Note that this is still a risky option as it is possible that the original person or vehicle may have pushed the mine down through soft earth and, by following, you may then inadvertently set it off.
- Move slowly and with concentration. If anyone is panicking then stop and wait until everyone is calm again, and always make sure there is a distance of 15 to 20 metres between each person.
- If you cannot clearly see or remember the way into or out of the minefield, and you cannot get or wait for help, then the only option is to probe for mines.

*Note that in areas where mines are known or suspected to have been laid, personnel should be provided with mine awareness training. Practise actions to be taken when mines are discovered or when personnel find themselves in a minefield.*

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Probing is carried out with a knife or sharp metal spike or blade measuring at least 10 centimetres long. (This should perhaps be included in your kit or vehicle when travelling to areas at risk of mines.) With this blade, you will do something called probing where you carefully stick the blade into the ground at an angle of 30 degrees. Every square centimetre of the path you take must be probed. If you touch any obstruction, then this must be carefully exposed. If it is a mine, then tell the others and mark the precise spot and continue probing. Do not attempt to lift or move the mine. Make sure you probe a wide enough path for safe walking, but not too wide since this is an extremely time-consuming and nerve-wracking exercise.

## Unexploded ordnance

Unexploded ordnance (UXO) refers to explosive munitions that have been fired, thrown, dropped or launched but that have failed to detonate as intended. UXO includes artillery and tank shells, mortar bombs, fuses, grenades, large and small bombs including cluster munitions, submunitions, rockets and missiles.

There may be numerous reasons as to why UXO did not detonate when deployed, but this is irrelevant. What is important is that it poses a serious danger to the lives and health of those in the areas affected for years to come and, if you find yourself working in a potential UXO-affected area, you need to seek professional



advice. As when working in potentially mined areas, always maintain updated and verified contact details of mine action centres and agencies, United Nations/NGO security officers, and local police in your area, as well as medical facilities. Once an accident occurs, time is of the essence and it may be too late to find and look for the correct contact numbers.

In recent years, the use of cluster submunitions (commonly referred to as cluster bombs) has been brought to the public's attention because of the large proportion that fail to explode on impact, thereby posing a serious threat to both the local population and humanitarian workers in the area. In the case of cluster bombs, as many as 30 per cent may have failed to explode on impact and remain a serious hazard for years after a conflict.

Cluster submunitions are classified as either bomblets, grenades, or mines. They are small explosive-filled or chemical-filled devices designed for saturation coverage of a large area. Such cluster bombs are usually dispersed by missiles, rockets or projectiles while in flight and therefore tend to scatter over a large area. The major difference between scatterable mines (cluster bombs) and placed mines (traditional mines) is that the scatterable mines land on the surface and can be seen. Placed mines may be hidden or buried in the ground and usually require specialist equipment or techniques to find them.

### UXO facts

- ❖ UXO is often extremely unstable and can detonate at the slightest touch.
- ❖ Accidental injuries often occur when people are farming or carrying out construction work in a contaminated area and intentionally touch, move or tamper with it.
- ❖ It can be buried beneath the ground or hidden beneath rubble or collapsed walls.
- ❖ UXO can even be found lodged in trees or hanging from branches, hedges and fences.
- ❖ UXO comes in various 'military' colours – khaki, green, brown, tan, grey – or can be unpainted. It is usually made of metal, but can also be made of plastic. If it has been in the open for a long time, UXO may have rusted or become discoloured, partially hidden, obscured by dirt and mud, and difficult to recognize. In some instances, children may become attracted to its bright colours and many accidents occur involving children tampering with UXO.

Many of the same rules are to be followed as when in mined areas.

- Never approach, touch or tamper with UXO.
- Ordnance may have penetrated the ground without going off and can still be dangerous.
- If you have not dropped it, do not pick it up.
- Do not collect war souvenirs.
- Be careful of objects of interest beside the road.
- If there are signs of a cluster bomb attack, then there are likely to be hundreds if not thousands of bomblets nearby.



**Be aware.** The local population does not often differentiate between mines and other ordnance. They may simply refer to bombs in general, or to mines in general. Determining the type they are referring to may make a significant difference to your travel plans; mine-contaminated areas often pose a greater hazard to travelling than unexploded ordnance. However, if in doubt, assume the worst and avoid the area. Even if only one source indicates an area is dangerous, avoid it.

## Violent assault and sexual aggression

Being subjected to violence or an assault while on mission can have many long-term effects. You must be aware that everyone is a potential victim and that assault may take a variety of forms. The best protection you have from this type of situation is to minimize the risk by being aware of the situation in your area and by observing the security rules and regulations that were designed to ensure your safety while on mission.

Sexual assault is a crime of violence that can include physical force and coercion. Those who force sex on others are often not motivated by sex, but rather are acting out their desire to hurt and control another person.

In many cases of sexual assault, the victim knows their attacker and the assault takes place during social outings. This kind of attack is known as date rape. The aggressor usually claims this is not rape, while the victim tends not to report the crime to the authorities or seek any kind of help. Even though many victims do not tell anyone what happened to them, their emotional wounds are likely to manifest themselves sooner or later through changed behaviour, depression and even suicide attempts.

In cases where the attacker is not known, opportunity is a common reason for sexual assault. Frequently, the opportunistic rapist carries out the assault while in the process of committing another crime, e.g., a robbery or carjacking. For this reason, the steps that you take to enhance your personal security can also mitigate the risk of common forms of assault and sexual aggression. This makes it very important to always follow the rules relating to personal safety, such as those described below.

### Personal safety rules

#### Avoid:

- ✖ movements alone and at night – on foot or by car
- ✖ isolated, unsafe or poorly lit locations
- ✖ high-crime areas
- ✖ taking drugs and excessive use of alcohol
- ✖ dressing inappropriately to the local culture and norms
- ✖ intimate relations with locals

#### Do:

- ✓ carry an alarm/radio/phone with you at all times
- ✓ ensure drugs are not put in your drinks; do not leave drinks unattended in bars or with people you do not really know
- ✓ dress in line with the local cultural norms
- ✓ wear comfortable shoes
- ✓ socialize in groups
- ✓ share accommodation
- ✓ show self-confidence

**Trust your instincts: if they tell you to leave an area or situation, then do so.**

### How to react during a sexual assault

When a person is about to be attacked, the ability to react depends on the amount of time between the threat of attack and the actual attack. Initially, you may use verbal or physical tactics or may be overwhelmed with fear and not resist at all. In deciding what action to take, you must take into consideration the type of rapist, the environment and your own capabilities. You may choose one or a combination of the following options:

- Passive resistance – Do or say anything to ruin the attacker's desire to force sexual contact with you, such as saying that you have a sexually transmitted disease or that you have your period.
- Active resistance – Shout for help, use an alarm, run away if there is somewhere safe to run to, or fight back furiously.
- Submit – Do this only if you sense your life is in danger and survival becomes your only objective.

### After a sexual assault

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- A sympathetic person (of the same sex) should immediately be assigned to comfort the victim.
- A doctor (preferably of the same sex) should examine the victim as soon as possible in case urgent treatment is necessary, and to deal with potential infection with sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV) with a post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kit, possible pregnancy and any other injuries.
- Outside specialist counselling should be proposed.
- Any wish to leave the operational area or to quit the mission should be fully supported.
- Mid- and long-term follow-up care must be ensured, whether the victim remains in the operational area or returns home.

**Consult the victim about the steps being taken, as the feeling of having some control is important.**

### Reporting the crime

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Following any assault, the International Federation encourages people to report the incidence of this violent crime to the local authorities. In the case of sexual aggression, the police should be involved with the victim's consent and confidentiality must always be respected by senior field managers.

Be aware that the police will question the victim in detail about the event. They should behave correctly, treating the victim with dignity and respect. However, sometimes they may be less sensitive than desired.

It is important that the victim has a medical examination – preferably by a doctor of the same sex – before washing in order to preserve evidence. A friend or close colleague should accompany the victim through this process to help them cope.



**Remember!** Witnesses of rape and sexual violence, colleagues and friends of the victim will also be affected and need appropriate support. Help and professional counselling should be proposed automatically to all who may require it.



# Security framework and Minimum Security Requirements (MSR) for Federation field operations

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### Document authorization

Stakeholder	Name	Position	Date approved
Author	Lars Tangen	Security unit	05/10/07
	John Dyer		
	Karl Julisson		
Document owner	Lars Tangen	Manager security unit	05/10/07
Document authorizer	Markku Niskala	Secretary General	15/10/07
Stakeholder	Thomas Gurtner	Director CP division	05/10/07
	Stephen Ingles	Director SS division	08/10/07
	Christophe Lanord	Legal unit	05/10/07

## Version 1

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## 1. Purpose and scope

The security framework and MSR improves the safety of all Federation staff by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of individuals included within the Federation security system as well as setting the minimum operational security requirements for all field operations.

The security framework and MSR applies to all field operations. All delegates, local staff, volunteers working with the Federation, visitors, Federation engaged consultants, and any other personnel operating under the Federation umbrella in the operational area are included in the term “Federation staff” for the purpose of the MSR.

PNSs that have an Integration or Service Agreement with a security component with the Federation operate under the Federation's security umbrella, but each PNS Head of Mission is responsible for his/her personnel's full compliance with the Federation's Code of Conduct and Security Regulations and Plans. PNS delegates, local staff, volunteers, visitors operating under an integration agreement or service agreement with a security component are also considered Federation Staff for the purposes of the MSR.

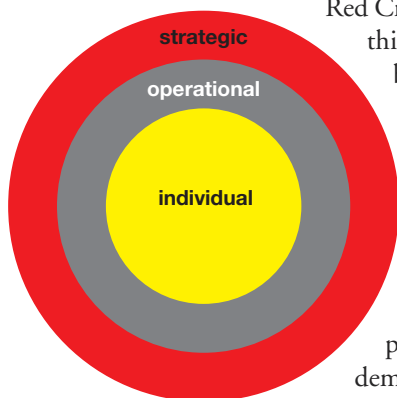
All Federation staff are individually responsible for their accompanying family members' and visitors' knowledge of and compliance with Federation security regulations, plans and procedures.

The Federation's security management is independent from the UN or the NGO community's security management structure and procedures. The Federation, National Societies, and the ICRC, each maintain their independent security structures, collaborate and provide one another with security support. In situations for which Article 5 of the Seville Agreement requires a Lead Agency other than the Federation, the Federation must conform its security structure to the guidelines provided by the Lead Agency while maintaining its own security structure and possibly further restrictions.

**The implementation and maintenance of the MSR are an integral part of all senior field managers' (Head of zone, regional representative, country representative, Federation representative, team leader) responsibilities. While specific roles and duties may be delegated, the ultimate responsibility and accountability for MSR implementation and maintenance remains with the senior field manager.**

## 2. Federation security framework

At a strategic level the Federation and National Societies are responsible for ensuring effective procedures are in place to protect and reinforce the image of the



Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. They achieve this by ensuring that they operate within the boundaries of the Fundamental Principles, the Code of Conduct and have effective security policies and procedures in place to guide field operations. As employers the Federation and National Societies are also responsible for ensuring that they have effective recruitment, training and management processes in place to ensure that personnel are capable of undertaking the roles demanded of them.

Effective security is also dependent of ensuring that the image and reputation of the Red Cross Red Crescent movement is maintained at an operational field level. Senior regional, country and operations managers are responsible for ensuring that effective security planning is conducted and that sound security management structures are established. The successful implementation of these plans will also be dependent on effective monitoring of situations and maintaining working relations with other organisations and key players operating in the area.

It is expected that individuals will undertake their duties in a competent manner and be respected for the work they do. Individuals are responsible for ensuring they understand their responsibilities within the operation. They must also have a clear understanding of security plans and comply with security procedures. As field operators on the ground they are also closest and therefore should be most attuned to the environment. Not only must they therefore ensure that they maintain a high level of awareness but also that they report any changes they observe, in order that if required, plans can be adjusted.

Under this model it should be apparent that the layers are mutually supporting and therefore at each level Minimum Security Requirements must be implemented. Overall security will be diminished if any of the layers are weak.

### 3. MSR personal conduct

- ✎ All Federation staff are to comply fully with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent, the Federation Code of Conduct and Security Regulations.
- ✎ All Federation staff must inform themselves of the political, social, religious, cultural, and security environment, act appropriately and remain aware of and respond to changing situations.
- ✎ All Federation staff are to protect the integrity of the Federation and promote correct institutional and personal conduct/behaviour so that the acceptance of the institution is not jeopardised nor its image tarnished.
- ✎ Federation staff are to report all breaches of security regulations, including the Code of Conduct, and especially any forms of abuse, to line managers.

### 4. MSR training and preparation

#### 4.1. Senior field managers

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- ✎ Senior field managers are to participate in the security management training conducted by the Federation.
- ✎ All senior field managers are to receive a briefing by the Security Unit in Geneva prior to each deployment.

#### 4.2. Federation staff

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- ✎ Before Federation delegates assume their duties in field missions they are to have participated in a Basic Training Course, Field Induction Course or other Red Cross Red Crescent movement training approved by the security unit in Geneva that involves security training and explains the Federation's security framework.
- ✎ All Federation staff must know what to do in case of accidents or security incidents.
- ✎ Federation staff are to be given additional training in the specific needs of the field operation to which they are deployed. This might include, but is not limited to, telecommunication, driving, mine awareness, first aid, fire safety, and language.
- ✎ If Federation staff believe they have not been adequately briefed or trained for the operational environment in which they are asked to work, they have a responsibility to request additional information and/or training.

### 4.3. Host National Societies

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- Senior field managers are to actively liaise with and consult the host National Society on possible security risks. They are to keep the National Society well informed about the Federation's security framework in the country of operation.

## 5. MSR security management

### 5.1. Briefings

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#### 5.1.1. In each field operation, senior field managers are to:

- Establish a security briefing system for new staff, delegates, dependants and visitors;
- Establish an induction program for new delegates; and
- Debrief delegates before departure from the delegation.

#### 5.1.2. Briefings are to include:

- The security situation in the country and specific threats to the Red Cross Red Crescent, based upon security analysis and risk, threat and vulnerability assessments;
- The security regulations, contingency plans, incident management procedures, Code of Conduct and other security related regulations, plans and papers; and
- The security hierarchy and line management.

### 5.2. Information sharing

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- Senior field managers are to establish a culture of information sharing and allocate time in meetings for security issues to be discussed as well as hold additional security meetings when necessary.
- The senior field manager is to maintain a record of the current location and contact details of all Federation staff under his/her security management.
- If Federation staff find that the MSR is not in place or maintained they have an obligation to inform the senior field manager responsible.

### 5.3. Regulations and contingency planning

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- Security Regulations are mandatory in all locations where the Federation operates. The regulations must be based on sound security analysis and threat, vulnerability and risk assessments.

- Senior field managers in all locations where the Federation operates are to draft contingency plans as necessary including, at a minimum, relocation and medevac plans, and attach all contingency plans to the current security regulations as annexes.
- Senior field managers are to base security regulations on the standard Federation template, review them if the situation changes (and at least every six months), update them if required, and send a copy of the security regulations and any revisions to the security unit in Geneva.
- Federation staff are to report security incidents to their managers immediately, and senior field managers must report them to the security unit in Geneva within 48 hours, using current incident reporting procedures.

#### 5.4. Security phases

<b>White phase</b>	Situation is normal	No major security concerns
<b>Yellow phase</b>	Situation of heightened tension initiated	Some security concerns. Heightened security awareness
<b>Orange phase</b>	Emergency situation	Access to beneficiaries limited. Risk to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel severe, and tight security management needed
<b>Red phase</b>	Relocation or hibernation	Conditions do not allow work. Risk to Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel extreme

- The Federation operates under a standard four phase security classification system across all field operations.
- The senior field manager will establish the phase level and undertake security planning in accordance with that level.
- The senior field manager will declare red phase following (if time permits) authorisation of the director of the coordination and programmes division, in consultation with the Manager of the Security Unit in Geneva.

- If orange and/or red phases have been declared, the decision to return to a lower phase will be taken only following consultation with the Manager of the Security Unit Geneva.

### 5.5. Critical incident management

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- Senior field managers will establish critical incident management procedures in each field location based on Federation procedures .

### 5.6. Field movement control

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- Security regulations will include field movement regulations that direct the manner in which all field movements are to be conducted, including a definition of the operational base and approval procedures for field movements outside the operational base.
- Operational field movements must correspond to an operational goal.
- Vehicle movements are not to occur outside the operational base during the hours of darkness.
- Vehicles are to be road worthy and clearly identified in accordance with the Fleet Manual.
- All operational field movements are to have a primary and secondary means of communicating with the base location.

### 5.7 .Office and warehouse security

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- Office and warehouse premises are to be located in a safe area based on a risk assessment.
- Office and warehouse premises are to be marked with the Federation logo, unless an exception is granted due to security concerns.
- Senior field managers are to implement security measures and access control appropriate to the risk assessment as well as suitable fire precautions.

### 5.8. Residential security

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- Residences are to be located in a safe area based on a risk assessment.
- Residences are to be located close together if practicable and apartments on the ground floor or above the fourth floor are to be avoided.
- Senior field managers are to implement security measures and access control appropriate to the risk assessment as well as suitable fire precautions.

- Only Federation staff and accompanying family members may live in Federation residences.
- Federation staff are to ensure a minimum of seven (7) days food and water supplies are maintained in residences.

## 5.9. Communications

- The senior field manager is to ensure that communications is established between operational field sites and the operational base that enables real time two way communications 24/7.
- Where the general risk assessment indicates that there is a possibility of having to consider declaring yellow or higher security phases, the senior field manager is to ensure that the communications is not dependent on public or private commercial providers (e.g., land or mobile phone lines).

## 6. MSR finance

- Senior field managers are to include security needs/costs when planning budgets.
- Senior field managers are to implement clear rules on finance security management, covering storage, cash transport, payments etc., in accordance with financial procedures.

## 7. Abbreviations/acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
<b>MSR</b>	Minimum security requirements
<b>NS</b>	National Society
<b>PNS</b>	Participating National Society
<b>HoZ</b>	Head of zone
<b>Reg.rep</b>	Regional representative
<b>Country rep.</b>	Country representative
<b>Fed.rep</b>	Federation representative

## 8. Related documents

File number	Name	Version
	Model Security Regulations	18-10-06
	Critical Incident Management	2
	Relocation Plan Template	2007
	Security Management Training Course	2007
	Code of Conduct	Latest version
	Fleet Manual	Latest version

## 9. Document revision history

Version	Date	Details
001	15/10/07	Final approval by Secretary General

# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

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## **Humanity**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

## **Impartiality**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

## **Neutrality**

In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

## **Independence**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

## **Voluntary service**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

## **Unity**

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

## **Universality**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies promotes the humanitarian activities of National Societies among vulnerable people.

By coordinating international disaster relief and encouraging development support it seeks to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

The International Federation, the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together constitute the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.