

Guideline for Duty of Care in Swedish Red Cross International Operations

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Svenska Röda Korset

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Table of Contents

1	SRC Duty of Care in International Operations	3
1.1	Introduction / background	3
1.2	Application and scope of the guideline	3
1.3	What is Duty of Care?	3
2	Scope of SRC's Duty of Care	4
3	Obligations & Requirements	5
3.1	Risk Assessments	5
3.2	Mitigation Measures	6
3.3	Information & Training	7
3.4	Informed Consent	8
3.5	Expert Advice	8
3.6	Incident Reporting	9
3.7	Incident Response	10
3.8	Post-incident Support	10
3.9	Compliance Monitoring	11
4	Compliance Monitoring	12
5	Sharing Duty of Care	13

1 SRC Duty of Care in International Operations

1.1 Introduction / background

In today's increasingly volatile world, the global nature of Swedish Red Cross (SRC) engagement and programme activities presents ever-greater risks to its personnel. The organisation's international operations, as part of the RCRC Movement, are often located in complex and demanding environments. SRC staff and delegates travel to and work in areas where there are increased risks to their personal security and safety, their physical health, or their wellbeing. As a responsible organisation and employer, SRC takes the security, safety, health and welfare of its people seriously.

This document describes the organisation's duty of care obligations towards its personnel and the requirements and responsibilities involved in fulfilling these obligations. Details on the mechanisms and procedures to deliver duty of care are found in other key operational documents, such as SRC's International Security Framework and its Delegate Employment Conditions. This document aims to consolidate the organisation's position on duty of care and to guide managers and SRC personnel on the extent of SRC's obligations, within the context of its international operations.

1.2 Application and scope of the guideline

This guideline applies to any red crosser on contract with the SRC (civil servant, volunteer, trustee, delegate, field staff, intern, student, consultant or other) who travels to, visits or is deployed to work in SRC international operations.

SRC has identified nine core duty of care obligations towards staff, delegates and associated parties for managing their security, safety, health and wellbeing within SRC's international operations.

1.3 What is Duty of Care?

Duty of care is the moral and, in many cases, legal obligation on an employer to provide a reasonable standard of care towards its personnel, enabling them to undertake activities in the securest, safest and healthiest way possible.

Duty of care principally addresses the duties on the part of an organisation to mitigate, or otherwise address, all foreseeable risks that may harm or injure its employees, those acting on its behalf, or for whom it has a level of responsibility.

These duties are focused on four key elements of 'care' that should be afforded to personnel - security, safety, health, and psychological wellbeing¹. Each of the four elements are intrinsically linked. For example, security and safety incidents can result in injury or medical emergencies. Insecurity and the resulting restrictions can affect an individual's wellbeing and ultimately their health. Consistently high levels of stress impacts



¹ Security is primarily concerned with intentional acts of violence, aggression and/or criminal acts against personnel, assets or property, whereas safety refers to unintentional or accidental acts, events or hazards.

wellbeing which in turn affects an individual's actions with regards to their own personal security and safety.

SRC staff and delegates are exposed to a wide range of risks while travelling and working as part of SRC's international engagements and operations. These risks include security risks (violence, crime and armed conflict), environmental and occupational safety risks (natural hazards, unsafe transportation, and precarious working environments), health risks (injury and illness, and limited medical care), and psychological risks (lack of security, space or privacy, heavy workloads, internal conflicts, and instances of harassment, bullying or discrimination).

Duty of care obligations apply equally in both high- and low- risk environments. However, it is expected that organisations take even greater responsibility for the care of personnel in higher risk situations. It is recognised that not all risks can be mitigated, particularly in some of the environments in which SRC staff and delegates are required to work. Focus is therefore placed upon the 'reasonableness'² of actions, and on personnel being provided with the information and support needed to make an informed decision about the risks they are exposed to.

Duty of care is also a shared obligation, and individuals are expected to take an active role in managing their own security, safety, health and wellbeing. Individuals also owe a duty of care towards the people they work with - direct colleagues, other staff members, volunteers, and partners.

2 Scope of SRC's Duty of Care

In Swedish law, 'duty of care' is not associated with a particular legal definition. However, the Working Environment Act (WEA) lays down many requirements that are considered as duty of care obligations and focuses on ensuring a satisfactory working environment for employees, with respect to both physical and mental conditions.

The WEA is limited to Swedish territory and territorial waters. However, under the WEA all staff and delegates travelling or deploying internationally that have a contractual relationship with SRC must be suitably informed of, and prepared for, the risks in their operating environment through a combination of information, briefings and training. Although the WEA's jurisdiction has limited geographical scope, consideration must also be given to the regulatory requirements and labour laws within the countries that SRC operates.

Duty of care obligations are not only limited to contractual relations such as those between an employer and employee. The degree of responsibility an organisation has towards an individual is also determined by the extent to which that person has control over their working environment. SRC also has a duty of care towards those who are acting on behalf of the organisation, such as consultants and official visitors, in its international operations.

In defining the scope of SRC's duty of care obligations, the organisation is committed to move beyond mere legal compliance and ensure that the needs of staff and delegates remain

² Reasonableness is defined by the actions others would take in a similar situation and is subjective test for determining negligence. "Reasonable care - the degree of caution and concern for the security and safety of others an ordinarily prudent and rational person would exercise in the same circumstances".

central to its duty of care approach, to provide - as far as is reasonably practicable - a secure, safe and healthy working environment for all its personnel.

SRC recognises that there may be challenges in fulfilling aspects of its duty of care obligations in some operational environments. Where the organisation's duty of care cannot be met fully, this must be clearly identified and reviewed by senior management, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, to ensure that both the organisation and individuals fully understand and accept these gaps.

3 Obligations & Requirements

SRC has identified nine core duty of care obligations towards staff, delegates and associated parties for managing their security, safety, health and wellbeing within SRC's international operations.



3.1 Risk Assessments



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to identify and evaluate all risks to its personnel, across all offices and operational areas. Risk assessments must consider both security and safety risks to staff and delegates, as well as risks to their health and wellbeing. On a more general level, the organisation's risk awareness is described in the enclosed appendix. On a detailed level, risk assessments are an essential tool in making sure that SRC has considered the key foreseeable risks related to a particular

deployment, field trip or programme activity, which must be documented, endorsed by senior management, and reviewed and updated regularly.

Essential Requirements:

- Security and safety risk assessments are completed for all locations where SRC has an operational presence, or where delegates are frequently deployed.
- Health risks, including psychological risks, are assessed in all locations where SRC has an operational presence, or where delegates are frequently deployed.
- Decisions to establish or expand programming activities, or to deploy personnel in new areas, routinely consider the risk implications for SRC staff and delegates early in the planning process.
- All SRC delegate deployments are informed by a risk assessment carried out in relation to the role, operational context, security and health arrangements in place, and personal risk profile.
- All international travel by SRC staff is supported by a comprehensive travel risk assessment process.

Duty on Individuals: Stay informed

Seek information from your manager, International Security Advisor or International HR, and other colleagues. Be curious, do your own research and monitor the situation. The more aware you are to risks, the better you can protect yourself and your colleagues.

3.2 Mitigation Measures



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to ensure comprehensive, up-to-date plans, procedures and support mechanisms are established in all operations and programmes, to minimise risk of harm to SRC staff and delegates. Under duty of care, emphasis is on reasonable and practicable mitigation measures, therefore any measures must be proportionate to the level and type of risks in that location and appropriate for the activities or type of engagement. All mitigation measures, including support arrangements, must be clearly identified and documented, and regularly reviewed.

Essential Requirements:

- Detailed security and safety plans, appropriate to the risks in that location, are established in all locations where SRC has an operational presence.
- Staff health procedures and guidance are established in all locations where SRC has an operational presence.
- Appropriate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) mechanisms are identified locally and/or globally and communicated to SRC staff and delegates.
- Where support arrangements are provided by Movement partners, or host organisations, due diligence is undertaken to validate arrangements and assess their suitability for SRC staff and delegates and the risks in that location.

- All support arrangements and agreements are formalised and specify both parties' responsibilities and any limitations, in particular in the event of security incidents or medical emergencies.

Duty on Individuals: Know the rules and adhere to them

Familiarise yourself with regulations, procedures and plans in place to protect you and your colleagues. Be aware of any restrictions and how to respond if you feel unsafe, insecure, or unwell.

3.3 Information & Training



3. Information & Training

Ensure all SRC personnel receive information, guidance and training relevant for the risks, the context and their role

SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to inform all personnel of the risks they might be exposed to, and provide them with essential, up-to-date information and guidance. SRC staff and delegates must be provided with the necessary awareness and skills to enable them to safeguard themselves as well as their colleagues. Training is a vital part of strengthening duty of care. SRC must ensure that all staff and delegates have or

receive appropriate training, relevant to their role and the environments in which they work or travel, and that managers have the training and competencies to meet SRC's duty of care obligations.

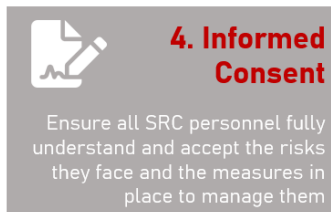
Essential Requirements:

- All new SRC staff and delegates receive a comprehensive induction on the organisation's approach and obligations to their security, safety, health and wellbeing while working or travelling internationally, and their specific responsibilities.
- All SRC staff and delegates are provided with detailed, up-to-date information and guidance on the health, safety and security risks in their destination prior to departure.
- All SRC staff and delegates travelling to higher risk contexts are provided with a briefing specific to the country or area, both before departure and on their arrival in their destination.
- All SRC staff and delegates are kept informed about incidents and events that occur in the country which may have a bearing on their health, safety and security.
- All SRC staff and delegates receive health, safety and security training appropriate to the risk environments in which they work and travel, and/or their responsibilities.

Duty on Individuals: Be prepared

Constantly gather information on the situation. Make sure you are briefed on arrival and kept informed. Seek training and participate in any training made available to you, to ensure you are equipped to deal with different risks and challenges, and to look after yourself and your colleagues.

3.4 Informed Consent



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to ensure that all staff and delegates fully understand and accept the risks they may face during their deployment or travels.

Informed consent is central to duty of care; it is vital that SRC staff and delegates can discuss concerns and say ‘no’ to a role, trip or situation that they feel compromises their health, safety or security. Informed consent is much more than form-filling and is

dependent on a meaningful and transparent dialogue to ensure individuals are truly informed when they agree to the risks involved and the measure in place to manage them.

Essential Requirements:

- All SRC delegates and staff are provided with the opportunity to raise and discuss any health, safety or security concerns associated with a potential deployment or travel, as early as possible.
- Experience and competencies of staff and delegates to work in high-risk environments, and to understand and accept the risks involved, is always considered during recruitments, and prior to travel and deployments.
- All SRC staff and delegates acknowledge in writing their understanding and acceptance of the risks, and their commitment to comply with regulations and procedures concerning their health, safety and security.

Duty on Individuals: Consider the risks

Fully understand the operational environment and risks involved so that you can make an informed decision in relation to a particular deployment or travel.

3.5 Expert Advice



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to ensure that all staff and delegates have access to qualified expertise and support when working and travelling as part of SRC’s international engagements and operations. Depending on the operational context, such expertise and support may be required at the global, regional, or country levels and often involves specialist security and safety support, access to medical

advice, or access to professional councillors or psychologists. Managers must also have access to relevant expertise to support them in managing the security, safety, health and wellbeing of staff and delegates within their geographic or line management responsibilities.

Essential Requirements:

- All SRC staff and delegates have easy access to appropriate security and safety advice and support when working and travelling internationally.
- Comprehensive health support is available to all SRC staff and delegates while working internationally, and they are adequately informed on how to access this support.

- All SRC staff and delegates are clearly informed of mental health and psychosocial support services available locally and/or globally, and the process by which this support can be accessed.
- SRC's managers maintain regular dialogue with SRC's Security and International HR Advisors and, where necessary, Movement partners, to ensure SRC's duty of care obligations are fully met.

Duty on Individuals: Seek advice or support

Ask for advice or support when you are unsure about the security or safety situation, if you have any health concerns, or you are feeling overwhelmed.

3.6 Incident Reporting



6. Incident Reporting

Ensure all SRC personnel feel able to report incidents or raise concerns regarding risks or level of care received, without recrimination

SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to provide trustworthy mechanisms for staff and delegates to report health, safety and security incidents, and also raise concerns about how risks are being addressed and/or the level of care received. Clear procedures and transparent mechanisms for reporting incidents and handling grievances not only ensures that individuals receive assistance quickly and that incidents are

managed effectively, but it also increases trust and confidence, and helps the organisation identify areas that need improvement.

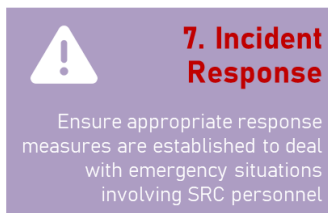
Essential Requirements:

- Effective incident reporting procedures are in place and all SRC staff and delegates are aware of the importance of reporting incidents, and what needs to be reported, to whom and how.
- All SRC staff and delegates are given opportunity to debrief post-deployment/travel, and to raise any concerns regarding the security, safety or health support provided.
- Effective mechanisms and procedures are established enabling SRC staff and delegates to raise concerns, and if required make a formal complaint about the level of care they or a colleague has received, including the provision for anonymous reporting.

Duty on Individuals: Report incidents, raise concerns and share information

Report all incidents and raise concerns with your manager, or directly with the International Security and HR Advisors. Take an active role in sharing information and

3.7 Incident Response



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to ensure an effective and timely response to incidents and emergency situations involving SRC staff and delegates, regardless of the location. A successful response to any emergency requires preparation. Detailed plans, with clear responsibilities and communication channels, appropriate insurance provision and assistance services, are vital especially

where a coordinated, effective response involving different locations and stakeholders is required.

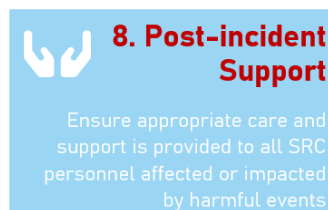
Essential Requirements:

- Effective procedures and structures are established to coordinate and manage the organisation's response to critical incidents.
- All SRC offices and field sites have detailed emergency relocation or hibernation plans established.
- Emergency medical assistance provision is available for all SRC staff and delegates travelling and working internationally.
- Detailed procedures are established for emergency access to appropriate medical facilities and, if required, the medical evacuation and/or repatriation of SRC staff and delegates, in all locations where SRC has an operational presence.

Duty on Individuals: Know what do in an emergency

Familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures in place and make sure you know exactly whom to call and what to do when something happens. Be aware that in some locations urgent medical assistance may not be available or will take time to arrange. Always seek medical advice early on to avoid minor illnesses or injuries escalating.

3.8 Post-incident Support



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to ensure appropriate support and insurances are in place to assist staff and delegates affected by incidents or harmful events. The level of support required will be determined by the nature of the incident or event, and its outcome, but may include medical treatment, longer-term psychological support, time off work,

insurance payments, and return-to-work plans.

Essential Requirements:

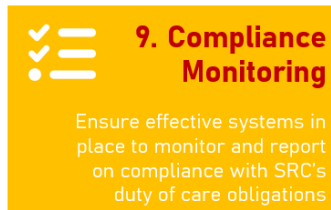
- Psychological support is available on request for all SRC staff and delegates following any incident or stressful situation or mission.
- All SRC staff and delegates affected by or involved in a serious incident or harmful event are required to access psychological support.
- Appropriate medical care is provided to all SRC staff and delegates following an incident or harmful event, to minimise the risks of longer-term injury or illness.

- Appropriate insurance provision and redress measures are in place to support SRC staff and delegates affected by incidents or harmful events.

Duty on Individuals: Access support

Access appropriate help and support following a stressful situation or incident. It is crucial to debrief and to receive medical and psychological support to help manage long-term impacts.

3.9 Compliance Monitoring



SRC, its managers and those designated responsible have a duty to regularly monitor its compliance with duty of care obligations, on both an individual and a wider systemic level. Appropriate systems must be established to ensure all the components of SRC's Duty of Care are in place and functioning as intended, and good levels of care are being provided to staff and delegates.

Senior management must have the ability to verify and enforce compliance with SRC's duty of care obligations and the mechanisms to apply sanctions in the event of non-compliance.



Essential Requirements:

- All reports of gaps in or non-compliance with the organisation's duty of care obligations are taken seriously and investigated.
- All security, safety and medical incidents affecting SRC staff and delegates are annually reviewed to draw out lessons for duty of care and how effectively it is being met.
- After-action reviews, conducted following critical incidents affecting SRC staff or delegates, consider implications for the organisations' duty of care obligations.
- Regular staff surveys are conducted with SRC staff and delegates to solicit feedback on the organisation's duty of care provision, with a report on actions taken in response to the survey.
- Duty of care reviews and audits are conducted periodically to ensure the organisation continues to meet its duty of care obligations.

Duty on Individuals: Share feedback and experiences

Give feedback on the level of care and support you have received. Highlighting gaps in the duty of care you received, and your experiences of security, safety, health, and wellbeing in the field, provides important lessons for the organisation.

4 Compliance Monitoring

	RACI Matrix			
	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Meeting SRC's Duty of Care Obligations	Line Managers International Dir.  Head of Unit  Country Rep	Secretary General	<input type="checkbox"/> Security Advisor <input type="checkbox"/> International HR Advisor <input type="checkbox"/> Movement Partner/Host Organisation – HQ level	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Staff Member, Delegate, or Visitor <input type="checkbox"/> Line Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Movement Partner/Host Organisation – CO level

Responsibilities and accountabilities for duty of care sits within SRC's management line. Duty of care responsibilities should be incorporated into the relevant role profiles and assessed as part of the organisation's formal performance management systems.

- Secretary General is accountable to the Governing Board for all matters pertaining to the security, safety, health and wellbeing of SRC personnel and for ensuring compliance with SRC's duty of care obligations and relevant legislation.
- International Director holds the responsibility for overall duty of care management within SRC's international operations and oversees the implementation of duty of care provision for all SRC staff, delegates, and associated parties travelling or deployed outside of Sweden.
- SRC Managers hold the duty of care responsibility for all personnel under their direct line management. Heads of Regional Unit must ensure an appropriate level of care, in line with SRC's duty of care, is provided to all staff and delegates, and associated parties travelling and working within in their respective countries. Heads of Thematic and other SRC Units hold the duty of care responsibilities for staff, under their direct management, travelling or deploying internationally, and must liaise closely with Heads of Regional Unit and SRC Country Representatives.
- SRC Country Representatives are team leaders in the field and carry the duty of care responsibility for all personnel whose work they coordinate in the field and for ensuring appropriate level of care is afforded to SRC staff and delegates, and associated parties travelling and working within their respective countries.
- Security Advisor is responsible for monitoring compliance with SRC's duty of care obligations in relation to the security and safety of personnel and providing the international Director and all relevant managers with advice, guidance and technical assistance.
- International HR Advisor is responsible for monitoring compliance with SRC's duty of care obligations in relation to the health and wellbeing of personnel and providing the International Director and all relevant managers with advice, guidance and technical assistance.
- Individual Staff and Delegates are accountable to the organisation for their own actions and responsible for adhering to SRC's policies, procedures and directives, and maintaining a secure, safe, and healthy working environment for themselves and their colleagues.

5 Sharing Duty of Care

Providing additional capacity to the RCRC Movement through the secondment of delegates, or surge/ERU deployments, is an essential part of SRC's international programming. However, as the contracting organisation, SRC will always remain accountable for these delegates' duty of care, even in situations where other organisations provide their security, safety, health, and wellbeing support.

While duty of care obligations cannot be delegated or transferred, the management and oversight of its provision can be shared with partners or host organisations. However, as the employer, SRC must always conduct appropriate due diligence to verify that suitable measures are in place to safeguard and support its delegates, and that these are being implemented and complied with. Any agreements or arrangements must be formally documented – detailing both parties' responsibilities, the level of support provided to delegates, and any limitations.